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Thesis

THE INFLUENCE OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER
ON HIS SHORT STORIES

by

Maud Spencer
(B.S., Westminster, 1918)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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THE INFLUENCE OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER
ON HIS SHORT STORIES

OUTLINE

I. . . FOREWORD

II... LIFE OF O. HENRY

1. Parentage and Birth
2. Early Life - Boyhood
3. Education
4. Influence of Aunt "Lina" Porter
5. Drug Store Experience
6. His Reading Days
7. Texan Days
 - (a) On the Ranch
 - (b) As a Draftsman
 - (c) Courtship and Elopement
 - (d) As a Banker
 - (e) As Reporter and Cartoonist
8. A Refugee in Central America
9. His Care of Mrs. Porter
10. His Sojourn in New Orleans
11. Life in Ohio State Penitentiary
 - (a) Secrecy as to His Whereabouts
 - (b) Tender Paternal Interest in His Daughter
 - (c) As Night Clerk
 - (d) Ohio Penitentiary Friendships
 - (e) An Amateur Short Story Writer
 - (f) Release from Prison
12. Life in New York
 - (a) His Debut in the Metropolis as a Short Story Writer
 - (b) Starting Life Over
 - (c) Definite Use of His Nom de Plume
 - (1) To Conceal His Identity
 - (d) Learning the City - Gathering Story Material
 - (1) Frequents Cheap Restaurants, Saloons, Cafes
 - (2) Visits Small City Parks
 - (3) His Interest in Working Girls
 - (4) Observes the Stream of Life
 - (5) "What's Around the Corner" Attitude

THE IMPRESSION OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER

ON HIS SHORT STORIES

CONTENTS

I. FOREWORD

II. LIFE OF O. HENRY

1. Parentage and Birth
2. Early Life - Childhood
3. Education
4. Influence of Aunt "Lina" Porter
5. Drug Store Experience
6. His Reading Days
7. Texas Days
 - (a) On the Ranch
 - (b) As a Journalist
 - (c) Constable and Sheriff
 - (d) As a Teacher
 - (e) As Reporter and Investigator
8. A Refugee in Central America
9. His Case of Mrs. Porter
10. His Sojourn in New Orleans
11. Life in Ohio State Penitentiary
 - (a) Secretary as to His Imprisonment
 - (b) Father's Personal Interest in His "Lucky" Star
 - (c) As Night Clerk
 - (d) Ohio Penitentiary Experience
 - (e) An Account of His Story within
 - (f) Release from Prison
12. Life in New York
 - (a) His Debut in the Metropolis as a Short Story Writer
 - (b) Starting Life Over
 - (c) Finding Use of his pen as "James" (i) To conceal his identity
 - (d) Penetration into the City - Journalism
 - (e) Literary Material
 - (f) Response to Quick Recognition
 - (g) Success, Fame
 - (h) Victor Small City trips
 - (i) His Interest in World War
 - (j) Character and Essence of Life
 - (k) "What's Ahead of the Writer"
13. Addenda

III

- (e) O. Henry's Character
 - (1) Life as a Comedy
 - (2) Whimsical Nature
 - (3) Extensive Newspaper Reader
 - (4) Sympathy for the Unfortunate
 - (5) The Money Question
 - (6) Few Friends, but True Ones
 - (7) His Reticence

- 13. Death in New York
 - (a) Poor Health
 - (b) Went to North Carolina
 - (c) Back in New York
 - (d) Death - June 5, 1910

III.. GENERAL NATURE OF O. HENRY'S LITERARY MATTER AND MANNER

- 1. Number of Volumes and Stories
- 2. Distinctly American
 - (a) In Setting
 - (b) In Material
- 3. Types
 - (a) Social
 - (b) Humor - Comedy
 - (c) Surprise Ending
 - (d) Problem
- 4. Style
 - (a) Mood Effects
 - (b) Character Sketches
 - (c) Unusual Plot
 - (d) Implied Moral

IV... INFLUENCE OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER ON HIS SHORT STORIES

(All points below to be illustrated by some of his stories)

- 1. Parental Influences
- 2. Boyhood Frolics and Adventure
- 3. Drug Store Experiences
- 4. On the Ranch in Texas
- 5. As a Cartoonist
- 6. As a Reporter
- 7. Elopement
- 8. As a Banker
- 9. Central American Experiences
- 10. New Orleans Influence
- 11. Penitentiary Experiences
 - (a) Would Not Prove an Alibi
 - (b) Night Clerk Experiences
- 12. Life in New York
 - (a) Starting Life Over
 - (b) Concealing His Identity (Real People)

- (e) O. Henry's Character
- (f) Life as a Society
- (g) Financial Matters
- (h) Extensive Newspaper Reading
- (i) Sympathy for the Underdog
- (j) The Money Question
- (k) Few Friends, but True Ones
- (l) His Persistence

- 13. Death in New York
- (a) Poor Health
- (b) Went to North Carolina
- (c) Back to New York
- (d) Death - June 8, 1902

III. GENERAL NATURE OF O. HENRY'S LITERARY MATTERS

- 1. Number of volumes and stories
- 2. Distinctly American
- (a) In Setting
- (b) In Material
- 3. Types
- (a) Social
- (b) Humor - Comedy
- (c) Sentimental
- (d) Problem
- 4. Style
- (a) Good Rhythmic
- (b) Characteristic
- (c) Unusual
- (d) Taped Model

IV. INTEREST OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER ON HIS SHORT STORIES

(All points below to be illustrated by some of the stories)

- 1. Personal Influences
- 2. Boyhood Experiences and Adversities
- 3. Early Story Experiences
- 4. On the Road in Texas
- 5. As a Watchdog
- 6. As a Reporter
- 7. Editorship
- 8. As a Lawyer
- 9. Central American Experiences
- 10. New Orleans Influence
- 11. Professional Experiences
- (a) Would not prove an ideal
- (b) First story experience
- 12. Life in New York
- (a) Settled into story
- (b) Overcoming the tendency
- (c) Ideal people

IV

- (c) Concealed Identities
(Not Real People)
- (d) "What's Just Around the Corner"
Attitude
- (e) Visits Saloons, Cheap Restaurants,
and Cafés to View Life
- (f) Interest in Working Girls
- (g) Visits Parks
- (h) Interest in the "Four Million"
- (i) Life as a Comedy
- (j) Whimsical Nature
- (k) Influence of His Extensive
Newspaper Reading
- (l) Sympathy for the Unfortunate
- (m) The Money Question
- (n) His New York Friends
- (o) Poor Health

V. ... SUMMARY

VI... CONCLUSION

- (a) Continued Identification
- (b) (Not War) People
- (c) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (d) Article
- (e) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (f) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (g) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (h) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (i) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (j) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (k) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (l) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (m) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (n) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (o) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (p) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (q) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (r) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (s) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (t) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (u) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (v) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (w) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (x) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (y) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"
- (z) "What's Your Friend the Farmer"

VI... CONCLUSION

THE INFLUENCE OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER
ON HIS SHORT STORIES

I. FOREWORD

As this discussion will deal with the influence of O. Henry's life on his short stories, it will be necessary to give a detailed and accurate account of the author's life, a brief discussion of his stories, and then show how his stories were influenced by his life. I, therefore, intend to develop this subject in the order and manner stated.

II. LIFE OF O. HENRY

Parentage and Birth

William Sidney Porter, the unique American short story writer, more widely known by his pen name "O. Henry", was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on September 11, 1862, and was named for his two grandfathers, William Swaim and Sidney Porter.

William Swaim, whose ancestors came from Holland in 1700, was a journalist and in 1827 became editor of the Greensboro "Patriot" which he used to

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II. LIFE OF O. HENRY

Parentage and Birth

William Sidney Porter, the unique American short story writer, more widely known by his pen name "O. Henry", was born in Greensburg, North Carolina, on September 17, 1862, and was named for his two grandfathers, William Swain and Sidney Porter. William Swain, whose ancestors came from Holland in 1700, was a journalist and in 1887 became editor of the Greensboro "Patriot" which he used to

advocate his strong convictions about the North and South on the slavery question. Abia Shirley Swaim, his wife, was the daughter of a rich planter of Princess Anne County, Virginia, who lived a gracious and exemplary life and was an invaluable friend to the poor, sick, and needy.

Mary Jane Virginia Swaim, the daughter of this couple, was educated in the two girls' schools of Greensboro, the "Greensboro College for Women" and "Edgeworth Female Seminary", the subject of her graduating essay from the latter institution being "The Influence of Misfortune on the Gifted". She specialized in French, painting, and drawing, and the fly-leaves of her books were covered with sketches and with selections of favorite poems. She was a superior student, had a keen mind, and wrote excellent English. Hints of humorous playfulness and quick wit may be found in her letters to her father. She was a universal favorite. A few years after her graduation from school, she married Dr. Algernon Sidney Porter. To this union were born three sons, the youngest of whom was William Sidney Porter. In personal appearance and traits of character, William Sidney Porter resembled his mother. In 1865, at the age of thirty, Mrs. Porter died of tuberculosis.

O. Henry's paternal grandfather, Sidney Porter, was a tall, heavy-set, jolly man of upright character. He was a wanderer. Leaving Connecticut as a clock agent in 1823, he wandered to Guilford, North Carolina, where he

advocate his strong conviction about the South and
South on the slavery question. Ada Wiley Davis,
his wife, was the daughter of a rich sugar planter of
Anne County, Virginia, who lived a frugal and exemplary
life and was an invaluable friend to the poor, sick, and
needy.

Henry Davis Virginia Davis, the daughter of
this couple, was educated in the two girls' schools of
Greensboro, the "Greensboro College for Women" and "High-
worth Female Seminary", the subjects of her fascinating
essay from the latter institution being "The Influence of
Misfortune on the Gifted". The subject of her poetry,
painting, and drawing, and the literary of her poems
were covered with emotion and with a feeling of sympathy
poems. She was a sensitive spirit. Her poems are
written excellent English. Her style of prose is
and color will be found in her letters to her father.
She was a universal favorite. A few years after her mar-
riage from school, she married Dr. William Sidney Foster.
To this union were born three sons, the youngest of whom
was William Sidney Foster. In personal appearance and
traits of character, William Sidney Foster resembled
his mother. In 1885, at the age of thirty, Mrs. Foster
died of tuberculosis.

Dr. Henry's paternal grandfather, Sidney Foster,
was a tall, heavy-set, jolly man of unyielding character.
He was a wanderer. Leaving Connecticut as a clerk agent
in 1825, he wandered to Guilford, North Carolina, where he

became a carriage maker, in which business he would have failed had it not been for the aid his wife and her family contributed. He had sunny good humor, joked and laughed at his work, loved children, mended their toys free, played with them and told them stories, drew cartoons, sang, and played the guitar. Faces and places interested him more than clocks and carriages. Ruth Worth Porter, O. Henry's grandmother, was noted for her will power and individuality, her quickness, wisdom, and native kindness. At the age of forty-three she was left a widow with seven children and a mortgaged home. To relieve the distress of the household and to keep the family together, she sewed and took in boarders. Then, when her daughter-in-law died, she took in her grandsons, studied medicine from her son, Algernon - O. Henry's father -, became a practitioner and ministered to the poor and needy.

Dr. Algernon Sidney Porter, the oldest of Sidney and Ruth Worth Porter's seven children, is said by David Scott to have been "the best-hearted man I ever saw, honest, high-toned, and generous." He was a "small man with a huge head and long beard; quiet, gentle, soft-voiced, self-effacing, who looked at you as if from another world and who walked with a step so noiseless, so echoless as to attract attention. This characteristic was inherited by O. Henry who seemed to me to be walking on down."¹ O. Henry received from his father his sympathy

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 42.

because a party's master, in which business he would have
failed had it not been for the aid his wife and her
family contributed. He had many good friends, loved and
loved at his work, loved children, needed their love
and played with them and told them stories, then car-
toon, song, and played the guitar. Peace and pleasure
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another world and who talked with a step so unhurried
so scholarly as to attract attention. His characteristic
was inherited by O. Henry who seemed to me to be walking on
down." O. Henry received from his father his sympathy

for all sorts and conditions of men, his overflowing generosity, his utter indifference to caste, his democracy, and his constructive ingenuity.

Early Life - Boyhood

William Sidney Porter's boyhood was full of interesting activities. His birthplace, Greensboro, had been named in honor of General Nathaniel Greene, who had fought against General Cornwallis only a few miles away at Guilford Court House during the Revolution. In 1809 the court house was moved to Greensboro and one of its logs, in which an Indian arrowhead was found, became a part of the Porter home. Some of the battles of the Civil War were fought in this locality; Porter knew the battle grounds well; and to none was their "appeal stronger or more fertile in storied suggestion"¹ than to him. Edgeworth College and the Presbyterian Church became hospitals for the Confederate and Union soldiers to whom Dr. Porter and his mother ministered, and both of whom laid up a hoard of stories that were to be passed on to Porter.

The Civil War was in progress when Porter was born. The Ku Klux Klan, Jim Crow cars, and Judge Tourgee, the first Carpet Bagger of Greensboro were quite familiar to him. He and the other children of the neighborhood played Ku Klux and knight. They played Indian, shooting pigs for game; waged warfare with guns on the muddy banks of streams; played chess; roller skated; boxed; and fenced. Two clubs, the Brickbats

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 52.

for all hope and confidence of man, his over-
passion, his own indifference to death, his
heroism, and his unselfish integrity.

Early Life - Boyhood

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than to him. His mother, John and the Presbyterian
Church became hostile to the Confederates and Union
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to be passed on to Porter.

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was born. The Ku Klux Klan, the Crow, and Lodge
Towers; the first Camp Porter at Greenboro were
familiar to him. He and the other children of the
neighborhood played Ku Klux and Kluge. They played
Indian, shooting pigs for game, made warlike with
guns on the sandy banks of streams; played chess; roller
skating; boxing; and tennis. Two clubs, the British
I. C. Alphonse & Co. "O. HENRY BROTHERS", p. 32.

and the Union Jacks, were formed among the boys and imaginative raids were conducted. He roamed through the woods with a congenial companion taking a book along to read, and although he liked to fish, to swim, and to hunt nuts, he loved the freedom of the outdoors more than the object of the trip. He entered into the mood of nature, but interpreted in waggish ways everything that was said and done. "He was always shy, his exuberant humor and rare gift of story telling seeming to take flight within the walls of a house."¹ If a stranger or uncongenial companion were in the group, Porter became silent.

Education

Influence of Aunt "Lina" Porter

When Porter was three years old his mother died, so the father and three boys went to live with Dr. Porter's mother, where Miss Evalina (Lina) Porter, the boys' aunt, took charge of them, and having a profound sense of responsibility, took the place of both parent and teacher, for she was Porter's only teacher. Miss "Lina" was a graduate of Edgeworth College and in the early sixties opened a school in one of the rooms of her mother's house. Later she taught many years in a school built on the Porter property. She was an excellent teacher, and meted out punishment where it was deserved. Besides the prescribed school subjects she taught drawing, and

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 70.

and the Union League, were formed among the boys and
the boys with a congenial disposition taking a book
along to read, and although he liked to fish, to swim,
and to hunt deer, he loved the freedom of the outdoors
more than the object of the trip. He entered into
the work of nature, but interpreted in various ways
everything that was said and done. "He was always the
his exuberant heart and the gift of story telling
seeming to come forth within the walls of a house." If
a stranger or unacquainted companion were in the group,
Forster would assist.

Biography

Life of Anna "Lina" Forster

When Forster was three years old his mother died,
so the father and three boys had to live with Mr. Forster's
mother, where Miss Evelyn (Lina) Forster, the daughter,
took charge of them, and having a profound sense of
responsibility, took the place of both parents and teacher.
For she was Forster's only teacher. Miss "Lina" was a
graduate of Edgewood College and in the early stages
opened a school in one of the rooms of her mother's
house. Later she taught many years in a school built on
the Forster property. She was an excellent teacher, and
set out punishment when it was deserved. Besides
the prescribed school subjects she taught drawing, and

Porter's sketches were used as models for the class. During arithmetic class he worked his sums at the blackboard with his right hand, and drew pictures of Miss "Lina" at the same time with his left in which he held both chalk and eraser. It was his trained ear that told him how near Miss "Lina" was. At the age of six he had sketched a picture of the town pump with a man passing. This was considered a remarkable feat and the sketch was hung in Clark Porter's drug store beside an ear of corn that had an odd number of rows. Porter's love of literature is due to his aunt, for she taught the pupils to assimilate the spirit of it. During recess she read stories to her pupils, and in school hours encouraged the composition of original ones by the children. Porter's stories were always the best of these. On Friday evenings she sponsored literary meetings in which she told stories and in which each member took part in some way.

Drug Store Experience

Porter's school days ended when he was fifteen and for five years thereafter, he acted as clerk in his uncle Clark Porter's drug store in Greensboro where he became a registered pharmacist. In the early days of his experience here, customers would come in, get their necessities, and have the goods charged. Too shy or reserved to inquire their names, Porter would sketch a picture of the customer at the top of the bill, and invariably Clark Porter would know who it was. His

Forster's sketches were used as models for the class. During artistic class he worked the same as the blackboard with his right hand, and drew pictures of Miss "Lina" at the same time with his left in which he held both chalk and eraser. It was his trained ear that told him how near Miss "Lina" was. At the age of six he had sketched a picture of the town pump with a man passing. This was considered a remarkable feat and the teacher was hung in Clark Forster's drug store beside an ear of corn that had an odd number of rows. Forster's love of literature is due to his aunt, for she taught the pupils to appreciate the value of it. During recess she read stories to her pupils, and in school hours encouraged the composition of original ones by the children. Forster's stories were always the best of these. On Friday evenings she sponsored literary meetings in which she told stories and in which each member took part in some way.

Young Store Experience

Forster's school days ended when he was fifteen and for five years thereafter, he acted as clerk in his uncle Clark Forster's drug store in Greenboro where he became a registered pharmacist. In the early days of his experience here, customers would come in, get their necessities, and have the goods charged. Too dry or reserved to receive their names, Forster would sketch a picture of the customer at the top of the bill, and invariably Clark Forster would know who it was. His

sketches had the peculiar quality of portraying the enduring characteristics of the individual. The drug store was a sort of "advanced course in human nature"¹ for the cartoonist. "It was a rendezvous for all classes." The customers would tell their ills and those of the family before they would buy twenty-five cents' worth of pills. Later they would return and report the results. "It was a physical confessional. All this was grist to O. Henry's mill."¹ The conversational atmosphere of the drug store gave a local flavor to some of the stories he was to write later. Porter's "distinctive skill.....is seen to better advantage in his pictures of groups than in his pictures of individuals. In the group pictures.....he put more of himself and more of the life of the community. They gave room for a sort of collective interpretation which seems.....very closely related to the plots of his short stories. There is the same selection of a central theme, the same saturation of a controlling idea, the same careful choice of contributory details, the same rejection of non-essentials, the same ability to fuse both theme and details into a single totality of effect. 'He could pack more of the social history of this city into a small picture than I thought possible.'"

Porter loved to play practical jokes. At the drug store, an old negro by the name of "Pink" swept the store, made fires, and ran on errands. "Pink" was

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 84.

sketches had the peculiar quality of portraying the

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All this was great to O. Henry's mind. The conversation

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The same ability to fuse both theme and details into a

single totality of effect. "He could keep more of the

social history of this city into a small picture than I

thought possible."

Porter loved to play practical jokes. At the

big store, an old negro by the name of "Pink" every

the store, made first, and ran on errands. "Pink" was

fond of whiskey. It was discovered that whiskey, that was used for prescriptions, was disappearing from the barrel in the cellar. One day upon investigation, Porter found near the barrel two straws which he filled with red pepper. The next time "Pink" was sent to the cellar, he howled and yelled like an Indian and dashed out to the pump. Porter pumped water for him and then innocently enough pumped the truth about the straws out of him.

His Reading Days

Porter's thirst for reading began at the age of eight years when the dime novel gripped him. He "soon imbibed the style and could tell as good a thriller as any. He changed from the dime novel to a sort of home-made melodrama. He was assimilative, that is, for facts as facts in books he cared but little, but for the way they were put together, for the way they were fused and used, for the after-tones and after-glow that the writer personally imparted, he cared everything."¹ His next interest was in the supernatural story, but just before he left the drug store, he read nothing but the classics. Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Charles Reade, Bulwer Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Victor Hugo, Dumas, and Burton were his favorites. In the years that followed, he became a diligent student of the dictionary and was an assiduous reader of the newspaper.

Texan Days - On the Ranch

Close confinement in the drug store began to

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", pp. 89-90.

threaten Porter's health, for he had never been strong, took no regular exercise, and very little recreation. As his mother and grandmother had both died of tuberculosis, his father became concerned about his health. Just at this time Dr. and Mrs. J. K. Hall were going to visit their two sons in Texas and invited him to go with them. This meant health and romance. He accepted the invitation and went.

"In La Salle County, Texas, Lee Hall's personality and achievements opened the door of romance to O. Henry.....'Red Hall was the bravest man I ever saw,' said the old Comanche chief. 'He did more to rid Texas of desperadoes, to establish law and order, than any officer Texas ever had,' wrote Mr. John E. Elgin. He was daring, his heart, as tender as that of the most lovable woman, awed and arrested men without using a gun."¹

Porter admired this man. During the two years Porter was in La Salle County, he read all of Hall's books. His thirst for knowledge was unquenchable. He read history, fiction, biography, science, and magazines - all attracted him. Tennyson became his favorite poet. For two years Webster's Unabridged Dictionary was his constant companion. He studied French, German, Spanish - Castilian Spanish - and in three months was the best speaker on the ranch. He was initiated as a cowboy but was more of a dreamer and an onlooker than a participant in the cowboy disciplines. He very easily learned the art of lassoing cattle, dipping and shearing sheep, of shooting from the saddle, and of managing a horse. He lived mostly with the Halls, not as an employee, but

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", pp. 95-6.

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 in the cowboy discipline. He very easily learned the
 art of lassoing cattle, branding and shearing sheep, of
 shooting from the saddle, and of managing a horse. He
 lived mostly with the Hall's, not as an employee, but
 as a friend. "G. Henry Porter," La. 25-2.

as a member of the family. Sometimes he would ride from fifteen to forty miles for the purpose of comparing Texas characters with those he knew in Greensboro. "This blending of close observation, avid reading, varied experience, and self-discipline in expression was incomparable preparation for his future work."¹

During the two years he spent on the ranch in Texas, Porter was asked to draw pictures to illustrate Joe Dixon's "Carbonate Days". He made forty sketches, but Mr. Dixon thought his book was a failure, and tearing the manuscript into a million pieces cast them to the wind and the book was forever lost; but Porter's drawings were preserved. At the same time Porter was writing short stories, which he put to trial by reading to Mrs. Hall as she went about her work. These proved unsatisfactory to him, however, so he destroyed them.

Porter was a silent fellow, with deep brooding blue eyes, and voiced a queer sound instead of a boyish laugh when amused. He would give a queer pungent turn to speech "getting off epigrams like little sharp bullets, every once in a while, and always unexpectedly," says Uncle Joe Dixon.²

While on the Hall farm in Texas it was Porter's duty to ride to the post office store at Fort Ewell, fifteen miles away, for the mail once or twice a week. It was a hot dusty ride in the burning sun. Clarence

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 104.

2. " " " " " " p. 499.

Crozier, a niece of the proprietor of the store, came to visit her aunt and uncle. Porter liked Clarence, developed a greater interest in the mail for which he drove three times a week, and often, besides, he would drive over in the evening to buy candy and stationery, which he neither needed nor could afford, from the fair hand of Clarence, who helped in the store. Sometimes he would stay for supper after which they would go to the organ and play and sing favorite songs. But Aunt Kitty did not like Porter. She promised Clarence a pretty curling white ostrich plume if she would go home and forget him. One day he arrived at the store to find that Clarence had gone without a farewell. Wounded by this discourtesy, he soon went to Austin.

The isolation of the ranch made him eager for the social contacts of the city. In 1884 when Porter went to Austin, the city had only ten thousand inhabitants who were, however, representative of the old and new, of the East and the West. No one ever touched the city at so many points or knew its social strata as familiarly as he. He belonged to a quartet which sang in church on Sunday and serenaded and gave other entertainments during the week. Porter was a society fellow, he played cards, danced, and the girl whom he accompanied was never a wall flower. He was an entertainer and a polished gentleman who rarely used slang but always the purest English.

For a while he worked as a clerk in a tobacco store and in a drug store in Austin. Later he conducted

... a class of the population of the town, some
to visit her and some to ...
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who rarely used slang but always the purest English.
For a while he worked as a clerk in a tobacco
store and in a drug store in Austin. Later he conducted

a squad of soldiers to quell a railroad strike at Fort Worth. Prior to receiving orders for this command, he had written a girl in Waco that he was coming to see her. Meanwhile receiving orders to take immediate command of his squad and being unable to fulfill his former intention, he perched himself on the front of the engine and waved to her as the train passed through the city. "He lived in an atmosphere of adventure that was the product of his own imagination."¹

While in camp, Porter and a few others secured leave of absence to attend a ball at the Park Hotel with orders to report at midnight sharp. They were late; Porter played jokes on the guards as they passed and got his men safely to their tents. The next morning, however, all were put in the guard house; were court-marshalled, and put on extra duty.

- As a Draftsman and as a Banker

Porter's first paying position in Austin was that of bookkeeper in the real estate firm of Maddox Brothers and Anderson with whom he worked for two years. He next applied and accepted a position in the Land Office during Dick Hall's term as Land Commissioner of Texas and became the most skillful draftsman on the force. The four years he remained in this office, which was just opposite the state capitol, were the happiest of Porter's life in Texas. For a little more than a year he acted as paying and receiving teller in

1. Arthur Page, "LITTLE PICTURES OF O. HENRY", p. 505.

a squad of soldiers to quell a railroad strike at Fort Worth. Porter is receiving orders for this command, he had written a girl in Texas that he was coming to see her. Meanwhile receiving orders to take immediate command of his squad and being unable to fulfill his former intention he perched himself on the front of the engine and waved to her as the train passed through the city. He lived in an atmosphere of adventure that was the product of his own imagination.

While in camp, Porter and a few others secured letters of appointment to attend a ball at the Fort Hotel with orders to report at midnight sharp. They were late; Porter glanced down on the guests as they passed and got his men ready to their tents. The next morning, however, all were out in the guest house; were surprised, and put on extra duty.

- As a frontman and as a soldier -

Porter's first paying position in Austin was that of bookkeeper in the real estate firm of Wadsworth, Brooks and Anderson with whom he worked for two years. He next applied and received a position in the Land Office during Dick Hall's term as Land Commissioner of Texas and became the most efficient draftsman on the force. Two years he remained in this office, which was just opposite the state capital, were the highlight of Porter's life in Texas. For a little more than a year he acted as paying and receiving cashier in

the First National Bank of Austin.

- Elopement

On July 5, 1877, William Sidney Porter and Athol Estes Roach were married. It was a case of love at first sight and the courtship was brief. Athol's parents did not favor Porter, and the young couple eloped at midnight. After the ceremony, the minister was sent to make peace with the parents. "Married life was to him (Porter) an incentive to effort - an incentive that sprang from perfect congeniality and an ambition to make and to have a home. Mrs. Porter was witty and musical, and was responsive to the drolleries of her husband,"¹ and yielded him invaluable assistance in his journalistic work. Their only child, Margaret, was born in 1878.

- As Reporter and Cartoonist

The year of his marriage he began to depend on his pen as a source of income and sent his stories to many firms for acceptance and publication. From April 28, 1894, to April 27, 1895, Porter was proprietor and editor of a small paper he named "THE ROLLING STONE". His experience with this paper convinced him "that writing of some sort was the profession for which he was best fitted.....that business was not his calling."² At the end of a year when this paper failed he was offered and he accepted a position on the "HOUSTON DAILY POST"

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 122.

2. " " " " " " " p. 128.

to which he contributed a column of clever anecdotes and sayings for the editorial page under the captions "Tales of the Town", "Postscripts and Pencillings", and "Some Postscripts". Characteristic of Porter's modesty, these were unsigned. Occasionally he contributed cartoons for publication in the "Daily Post". During a warm political campaign in Texas, he drew some of the finest cartoons seen in print anywhere. These were copied by papers all over the United States. When Porter left the "Post" on June 22, 1896, Mr. R. M. Johnston, who controlled the paper, paid him a fine compliment when he said, "Mr. Porter was a lovely character and one of the brightest men that I have come in contact with. He was modest almost to the point of self-effacement. His leaving the 'Houston Post' was an irretrievable loss to the paper, but the means possibly of developing the greatest short story writer of this or any other age."¹

A Refugee in Central America

Porter left Houston because he was summoned to appear at court and stand trial for embezzlement of funds while acting as paying and receiving teller of the First National Bank of Austin. "The indictment charged that on October 10, 1894 he had misappropriated \$554.48; on November 12, 1894, \$299.60; and on November 12, 1895, \$299.60."² Porter boarded the train for Austin, but his imagination outran his reason. Picturing himself a

1. Florence Stratton, "FOREWORD" of "POSTSCRIPTS", p.XI-XII.
2. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 136.

to which he contributed a column of clever anecdotes and sayings for the editorial page under the caption "Tales of the Town", "Facts of the Town", and "Some Postscript". Characteristic of Porter's modesty, these were untagged. Occasionally he contributed cartoons for publication in the "Daily Post". During a year political campaign in Texas, he drew some of the finest cartoons seen in print anywhere. These were copied by papers all over the United States. When Porter left the "Post" on June 22, 1890, Mr. R. M. Johnston, who controlled the paper, paid him a fine compliment when he said, "Mr. Porter was a lovely character and one of the brightest men that I have come in contact with. He was modest almost to the point of self-effacement. His leaving the 'Houston Post' was an irreparable loss to the paper for the means possibly of developing the greatest short story writer of this or any other age."

A Stranger in Central America

Porter left Houston because he was summoned to appear at court and stand trial for endorsement of funds while acting as paying and receiving teller of the First National Bank of Austin. The indictment charged that on October 10, 1894 he had misappropriated \$250.00; on November 12, 1894, \$250.00; and on November 12, 1895, \$250.00.² Porter boarded the train for Austin, but his investigation began his reason. Finding himself a

1. Florence Johnston, "Postscript" of "Postscript", p. 11-12.
2. O. Johnson's "The Life of Porter", p. 128.

prisoner and viewing the future, he left the train and went to New Orleans. "He was not merely saving himself and his family from humiliation, he was going to start life over again in a new place. His knowledge of Spanish and his ignorance of Honduras made the little Central American republic seem just the haven in which to anchor."¹ He was under a great strain. At New Orleans it is probable he boarded the first available steamer for Honduras and arrived at Trujilla, where for several months he "knocked around with refugees and consuls."² Here he found freedom, silence, and a sense of infinite peace. He contemplated making this his home and had selected a school for Margaret to attend when she and Mrs. Porter should arrive.

One day while he was standing on the wharf two men in tattered dress suits stepped from a newly arrived fruit steamer. The strangers were brothers, Al and Frank Jennings, leaders of one of the most notorious gangs of train robbers that ever infested the Southwest,³ who had several hundred thousand dollars in their possession and who had chartered a tramp steamer at Galveston, and were putting distance between them and the detectives who were on their trail. This meeting occurred on July 3rd; the next day was the Fourth. Porter treated them to a drink and they planned to celebrate the Fourth together.

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 137.

2. Frederic Tabor Cooper, "O. HENRY" from "SOME AMERICAN STORY TELLERS", p. 229.

3. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 139.

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when she and Mrs. Porter should arrive.

One day while he was standing on the wharf and

then in factored house with stepped from a newly arrived

fruit steamer. The stranger was John Brown, Al and

Frank Jennings, leaders of one of the most notorious

gangs of train robbers that ever infested the south-

west, who had several hundred thousand dollars in their

possession and who had chartered a tramp steamer at

Galveston, and were getting distance between them and

the detectives who were on their trail. This meeting

occurred on July 2nd; the next day was the Fourth.

Porter greeted them to a drink and they agreed to

celebrate the Fourth together.

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. BROWN'S BIOGRAPHY", p. 107.
2. Frederic Labor Cooper, "O. BROWN'S BIOGRAPHY", p. 107.
3. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. BROWN'S BIOGRAPHY", p. 107.

The next morning these three, two American traders, and an Englishman started forth playing and singing national airs, shooting, and yelling. While they were in a restaurant eating and drinking, they heard a great commotion caused by armed forces riding through the streets; there was excitement everywhere. They jumped up, made a clattering dash into the street shooting wildly into the air, and Al, dragging the leader of the loyalists off his pony, got on it, shooting and yelling like a maniac. "Reinforcements!" called the rebel general. Innocently enough they had assisted the loyal troops who had been losing in the uprising, rallied their forces and led them to victory without the loss of blood. The next day the governor thanked the American consul for the aid of the American patriots saying, "The incredible daring of the American riders had saved the nation."¹ The rebel general, however, demanded the lives of the outsiders who had ended the revolution before it had hardly begun, and the American consul advised a hasty departure. They rowed out to the "Helena" and escaped by encircling South America, arriving several months later in Mexico City. All this time Porter was known to his friends as "Bill." They told him their names and related their experiences, but Porter did not return the confidence. He was very secretive, but Jennings attributed his secrecy to an unfortunate love affair.

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 77.

The next morning these forces, the Americans, and an Englishman started forth playing and singing national airs, shouting, and yelling. This they were in a constant singing and shouting. They heard a great commotion caused by great forces riding through the streets; there was excitement everywhere. They jumped up, made a clattering dash into the street shooting wildly into the air, and Al, thinking the leader of the revolution got his money, got on it, shouting and yelling like a madman. "Reinforcements!" called the rebel general. "Reinforcements!" called the loyal troops who had been looking in the uprising, rallied their forces and led them to victory without the loss of a single man. The next day the governor thanked the American command for the aid of the American patriots saying, "The insurrection has been of the American rebels had saved the nation." The rebel general, however, demanded the lives of the officers who had ended the revolution before it had hardly begun, and the American command advised a heavy departure. They moved out to the "Rebel" and started by marching south America, arriving several months later in Mexico City. All this time Gordon was known to his friends as "Bill". They told him their names and related their experiences, and Gordon did not retain the confidence. He was very sensitive, and Jennings established his capacity to be a reformer's love affair.

In Mexico City they were invited to a ball where Porter smiled at a don's partner and later picked up her handkerchief which he presented to the lady instead of to the don. The don struck Porter in the face, Porter struck back, and just as the don directed his stiletto at Porter's throat, Jennings shot and killed him, whereupon all three fled.

They left Mexico City for San Diego, but on the way their money became exhausted and they decided to rob a bank. If you had seen the expression on Porter's face when Jennings invited him to join in the robbery and "the helpless surprise that scooted across it, you would believe as I do that he was never guilty"¹ of the charge of theft at the bank in Austin. They suggested that he hold the horses for them in front of the bank. "I don't believe I could even hold the horses,"² he answered. He suffered great distress during the two days they were gone. When they returned, "Colonel, congratulations. This is indeed a happy moment. I was so troubled in your absence,"³ he said. Porter was no lawbreaker. He had gladly thrown in his hat with a couple of fugitives and bandits "but it would have cut him to the soul to have been branded one of them."⁴ He was an aristocrat who possessed all the sensitiveness of a typical Southern gentleman.

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 92.
2. " " " " " " " " " p. 94.
3. " " " " " " " " " p. 95.
4. " " " " " " " " " p. 90.

Often he urged Jennings to quit the trail and settle in Central America and forget the past. Now often he would speak of his wife and child and tears would come into his eyes and a sob into his voice. Porter had not yet told them his name, nor had he even when they parted a short time later.

He sent letters to Mrs. Porter directed to a friend in Austin who passed them on to her. Some of these letters contained plans for her to come to Central America where they would have a home and where Margaret could still attend school. His letters were always cheerful and full of affection. Mrs. Porter did not want to depend on her parents for support, and planned to take a business course, but her health broke. Before Christmas she made a point lace handkerchief and sold it for twenty-five dollars, with which she sent her husband a box of useful articles and delicacies.

Porter "did not know for a month later that this box had been packed by Mrs. Porter when her temperature was 105°. As soon as he learned it, he gave up all hope of a Latin American home and started for Austin, determined to give himself up and take whatever medicine fate or the courts had in store for him."¹ He reached Austin on February 5, 1897. "His bondmen were not assessed at this time, but the amount of the bond was doubled and O. Henry went free until the next meeting of the Federal Court."

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 142.

His Care of Mrs. Porter

Upon his return, all his time and thought were devoted to the care of Mrs. Porter who was unable to walk now. He carried her to and from the carriage in which they took rides daily. These were happy days although they knew the end was near. On Sundays they would drive below the windows of the Presbyterian Church and listen to the service unseen by the congregation. When she died on July 25, 1897, Porter said, "I never saw such will-power. The only day she stayed in bed was the day she died."¹

His Sojourn in New Orleans

He then spent a few months in New Orleans and was there just long enough to imbibe the spirit of the city. He had written several stories there the worth of which was doubtful; therefore he decided to choose an assumed name. Picking up a newspaper and scanning the society page, he and a friend selected the name "Henry" from among a list of notables, as the last name.

"Now for the first name. I want something short."

"Why not a plain initial?" asked the friend.

"Good!" Porter replied, "and the easiest of all to make is 'O'."²

And thus his nom de plume "O. Henry" was chosen. The way "he chose his nom de plume illustrates a salient trait in his character - his inconsequentiality.....

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 142.

2. "The Personal O. Henry", Chronicles and Comment, BOOKMAN 29: 346.

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His Service in New Orleans

He then spent a few months in New Orleans and was there just long enough to inspire the spirit of the city. He had written several stories there and some of which were published. He had also written and translated an extended novel. Finding in a newspaper and translating the weekly page, he and a friend selected the name "Henry" from among a list of names, as the first name.

"Now for the first name. I want something short." "Why not a Greek initial?" asked the friend. "Good!" Porter replied, "and the constant of all the letters is 'H'."

And thus his new name "H. Henry" was chosen. The way he chose his new name illustrated a salient trait in his character - his incomprehensibility.....

Something of the same happy-go-lucky spirit went into all he did."¹

Life in Ohio State Penitentiary

When Porter's trial came up in February, 1898, he pleaded not guilty but seemed indifferent. One of his lawyers said he had never had so uncommunicative a client. Porter would tell him nothing; he seemed to be only a spectator. He was neither defensive nor self-assertive, which traits were as natural as breathing to him. No one at the time of the trial, not even the lawyers, nor witnesses, nor Porter himself realized the inconsistency of the last date of the charge, November 12, 1895, for he had resigned from the bank in December, 1894, and had not lived in Austin for almost a year. The jury rendered its verdict on February 17, 1898 and on March 25, Porter was sentenced to imprisonment in Ohio State Penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio, for a period of five years. From the evidence he should have been acquitted; it was because he fled the country and sought to avoid prosecution that he was indicted. Immediately after being sentenced he wrote a letter to his mother-in-law, Mrs. G. P. Roach, telling her that he was innocent of the charges in spite of the verdict adding, "I naturally am crushed by the result."²

1. "A Typically American Short Story Writer", Editorial, "CURRENT LITERATURE", 49:88.

2. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 146.

Somebody of the same happy-go-lucky nature went into

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Life in Ohio State Penitentiary

When Porter's trial came up in February, 1905

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nor self-assertive, which traits were as natural as

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not even the lawyers, nor witnesses, nor Porter himself

realized the inconsistency of the last date of the

charge, November 18, 1905, for he had resigned from the

bank in December, 1904, and had not lived in again for

almost a year. The jury rendered the verdict on

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3. "A Logically Analyzed Short Story," *Library of*

"*Library of Literature*", 43:83.

2. A. Jennings, "The Case of the Shadow with G. H. Hardy," p. 1

- Secrecy as to His Whereabouts

When Porter entered Ohio State Penitentiary he broke off all attachments with the outside world except his family. He was silent. None of his friends heard from him. He posed as a traveling man to his daughter, Margaret, and his letters to her were sent to Toledo, New Orleans, or some other city to be mailed to her. The stories Porter wrote in prison were sent to various publishers through the daughter of a cultured French banker in New Orleans and bore the New Orleans address.

Porter knew that if any one found out that he had served a sentence in the penitentiary, his chances for success would be forever doomed. He vowed that no one should discover the prison label on him, for he did not want to be a social outcast. Before he left the penitentiary he said to his friend, Al Jennings:

"The man who tries to hurl himself against the tide of humanity is sure to be sucked down in the undertow. I am going to swim with the current. 1

"When I get out, I will bury the name of Bill Porter in the depths of oblivion. No one shall know that the Ohio Penitentiary ever furnished me with board and bread." 2

"I will not and I could not endure the slanting, doubtful scrutiny of ignorant human dogs."

"I won't be under obligation to any one. When I get out from here, I'll strike free and bold. No one shall hold the club of ex-convict over me." 3

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 206.
2. " " " " " " " " " "
3. " " " " " " " " " " p. 208.

"You can't beat the game if any one ever finds out you once were a number. The only way to win is to conceal." 1

"I shall never mention the name of prison. I shall never speak of crime and punishments.....I will forget that I ever breathed behind these walls." 2

- Tender Parental Interest in His Daughter

Porter loved home and home associations. He had a tender paternal feeling for his small daughter with whom he had spent many happy hours, frequently telling and reading stories to her as she lay waiting for "Mr. Sandman" at night. Sometimes he played tricks on her by reading the lines across two pages and if she did not detect the breaks in thought, he knew she was asleep. Sometimes they tapped out tunes of familiar songs on the head of the bed.

The close relationship was partially broken for three and a half years while Porter was in prison, but Margaret did not know the reason. His desire was that she should not know until she were older when he could tell her himself. Although he did not mention her to his friends, thoughts of her were much in his mind, and stirred him to write stories that he might have money with which to buy her gifts. The intimacy between father and daughter was continued by correspondence. Porter's letters were written in a happy, playful, and often whimsical manner, but they sometimes contained words of commendation and advice.

[illegible]

"You don't need the gun if you are
ever kind, and you can't win a war."
The only way to win is to surrender."

"I shall never mention the name of
prison. I shall never speak of crime
and punishment..... I will forget that
I ever knew a man who was a thief."

- Father's Personal Interest in His Daughter -

For my loved home and home associations. In
and a tender, paternal feeling for his wife's daughter.
with whom he had spent many happy hours, especially
during and during the winter months to get as much rest as
possible. "Father" is right. "Someday" he played tricks
on her by reading the first volume of the paper and if she
did not detect the change in thought, she knew she was
misled. "Someday" they copy out much of Father's
songs on the back of the bed.

The close relationship was carefully broken
for three and a half years while Father was in prison.
But Father did not know the reason. He thought was
that she should not know until she was older when he
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ence. Father's letters were written in a happy, joyful
and often whimsical manner, but they contained constant
words of encouragement and advice.

- As Night Clerk

When Porter entered the penitentiary he was asked what his occupation was and he replied that he was a newspaper reporter. As there was no opportunity for that kind of work there, he was asked what else he could do, to which question he replied, "I am a registered pharmacist." Not long afterwards, Warden E. G. Coffin being sick, was given an overdose of arsenic by mistake. No one could find the right antidote. When Porter heard of the trouble, he walked leisurely to the drug store, calmly mixed a drink and gave it to the warden who in a few hours was out of danger. The next morning Porter was made night clerk of the drug store.

His hours as night clerk were from six o'clock in the evening until six o'clock in the morning. Night after night from fifty to two hundred men would file through the store where they received their quota of pills with a smile from the clerk. At certain hours he would visit the large hospital which was always full of patients, or probably make an extra call to relieve a sufferer whose moan he could detect from the store. Sickness was rampant in the penitentiary. Tuberculosis was as common there as colds outside. Probably no other convict knew the misery and suffering that existed within the walls as well as Porter did, for he was no ordinary convict. During his whole term he had practical freedom - he did not wear the ordinary

When Foster entered the penitentiary he was asked what his occupation was and he replied that he was a newspaper reporter. As there was no opportunity for that kind of work there he was asked what else he could do, to which question he replied, "I am a registered pharmacist." Not long afterwards, Walter R. G. Galtie being sick, was given an overdose of arsenic by mistake. No one could find the right antidote. When Foster heard of the trouble, he walked hastily to the drug store, calmly mixed a drink and gave it to the patient who in a few hours was out of danger. The next morning Foster was made night clerk of the drug store. His house at night clerk was from six o'clock in the evening until six o'clock in the morning. Night after night from fifty to two hundred men would file through the store where they received their meals of pills with a smile from the clerk. At certain hours he would visit the large hospital which was always full of patients, or possibly make an extra call to relieve a sufferer whose name he could detect from the store. Sickness was rampant in the penitentiary. Tuberculosis was as common there as colds outside. Probably no other convict knew the misery and suffering that existed within the walls as well as Foster did. For he was no ordinary convict. During his whole term he had practical freedom - he did not wear the ordinary

convict clothes; his bed was in the hospital and not in a damp dark cell; he read newspapers and magazines which were forbidden others; and as night clerk, he could go anywhere he pleased within the walls.

In this capacity he had ample opportunity to hear from his friends and other inmates, the experiences and stories of their own lives or the lives of others. Stories of the inhuman treatment of prisoners by officials were rife. Often as he sat in the store in the silence of the night, Porter could hear the piercing screams of an unruly prisoner being administered the "water" punishment, that is, an immense, violent stream of water, which took away the breath and injured the body, was turned completely on the victim for several minutes, after which the afflicted one was sent to the hospital for medical attention. Physically, no one could stand this treatment more than twice; the third time it proved fatal. This was a common form of punishment; it was given to some one almost every night; and just as frequently the death cart would bump along the cement floor of the corridor past the drug store. The groans of the victims and the grating sounds of the death cart wheels rent Porter's heart; his delicate nature could scarcely endure it.

In October, 1900, he was appointed to a position in the steward's office outside the walls where he had more freedom and a desk of his own where he could write if he chose. This position he retained until his release.

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In October, 1900, he was appointed to a position in the attorney's office outside the walls where he had more freedom and a desk of his own where he could write if he chose. This position he retained until his release.

- Ohio Penitentiary Friendships

Porter entered the penitentiary a stranger to all within its walls. Gradually, two bank embezzlers, a check forger, and a Western train robber became his friends. Some time later Al Jennings, the famous train bandit and bank robber who had picked him up in Honduras, was admitted; thus the friendship begun several years before was renewed and became the means of providing many pleasant occasions in their otherwise dreary environment. As drug clerk, Porter was in a position to counsel Jennings and he was directly responsible for Jennings's appointment as chaplain, post office clerk, and kitchen-supply clerk. These six men formed the "Recluse Club" which met secretly in the construction office every Sunday afternoon. At each meeting there was plenty of fun, interesting subjects were discussed, and a banquet, the food for which was smuggled from the kitchen, was served. Porter was king of this group, he was always in gay spirits. When members of the club were insulted, Porter was the peacemaker. Once one of the members needed financial assistance immediately. "Louisa", the cook, impertinently refused to contribute to his relief when Jennings appealed to him for a contribution. Jennings's feelings were injured. In a few days Porter received a bulky manuscript from Louisa. "What joint is now out of socket in this Paradise of the Lost?" said Porter. "He says he didn't think. That's the trouble with the world - it doesn't think. But the fellow who is starving or trampled on is compelled to

On the Penitentiary System

Porter entered the penitentiary a stranger to all within its walls. Gradually, two bank employees, a check forger, and a Western train robber became his friends. Some time later Al Jennings, the famous train bandit and bank robber who had picked him up in Honduras, was admitted; thus the friendship began several years before was renewed and became the means of providing very pleasant occasions in their otherwise dreary environment. As time passed, Porter was in a position to counsel Jennings and he was directly responsible for Jennings's appointment as chaplain, post office clerk, and kitchen-supply clerk. These six men formed the "Penitentiary Club" which met secretly in the construction office every Sunday afternoon. At each meeting there was plenty of food, interesting subjects were discussed, and a passport, the food for which was smuggled from the kitchen, was served. Porter was king of this group, he was always in gay spirits. When members of the club were invited, Porter was the guest of honor. Once one of the members needed financial assistance immediately. "Louise", the cook, hesitatingly refused to contribute to his relief when Jennings appealed to him for a contribution. Jennings's feelings were injured. In a few days Porter received a bulky manuscript from Louise. "What joint is now out of cocked in this Paradise of the Lost?" said Porter. "He says he didn't think. But that's the trouble with the world - it doesn't think. But the fellow who is staring or bawling on is compelled to

think. If men would investigate the claims of others and their justice, the human heart would beat with a kinder throb."¹ The club ended with this event, and with its breakup a deeper friendship between Porter and Jennings was cemented.

At this time there was in the penitentiary a crack safe opener, Dick Price, who having entered in his youth, was approaching the fortieth year of his imprisonment. Price's mother lived in Columbus, but every time she came to see her son, she was denied the privilege. Dick had wasted away with tuberculosis and was rapidly approaching death. One day the daughter of one of the staff of "The Press-Post Publishing Company" of Columbus unwittingly locked herself in the safe which was set by a time clock and could not be opened until the next morning. Dick Price was asked if he could and would open the safe and save the child's life with the promise that his pardon would be sought and probably granted if he were successful. He consented, and filed his finger nail down to the quick so that the nerve would be exposed that he might detect the inner movements of the safe lock. He was rushed to the publishing house where the safe was opened in precisely ten seconds - a marvelous feat - and the child rescued; but pardon was denied Dick; in another month he was taken to the hospital where he soon died. The next day he was buried. As his body was carried to the burying ground, an old woman was seen peering

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", pp. 219-220.

It was found that the child was born with a
 and that the child was born with a
 The child was born with a
 with a history of a long illness between 1910 and
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 At this time there was in the family a
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 self down to the gate so that the nurse could be exposed
 that he might check the inner movements of the case lock.
 He was rushed to the publishing house where the case was
 opened in great haste - a nervous feat - and
 the child rescued; but the child was killed; in another
 month he was taken to the hospital where he soon died.
 The next day he was buried. His body was carried
 to the burial ground, and the woman was seen peering
 at the funeral. "Through the shadows of a night"
 No. 210-220.

through the bars of the iron gate; Dick's mother was not even permitted to see her son's face in death.

Porter understood the gruesomeness and the suffering of the men in prison. He suffered mentally for them - their burdens tore his heart. Prison makes one mellow in his judgments. "This soft, golden toleration was one of the gracious traits of Porter's character. It won him friends even though his aloof dignity forbade familiarity. In the penitentiary he was universally respected. The meanest cutthroat in the ranges felt honored to serve him."¹

- An Amateur Short Story Writer

Porter wrote many stories while he was in prison although he would not acknowledge that he was writing seriously. When questioned he would say he was just practicing. Most of his stories were written while he was on duty as drug clerk between midnight and two o'clock in the morning whereupon he would stop, make his rounds in the hospital, and then return to his writing. Perhaps a terrific scream would pierce the air; Porter's face would quiver. "I try to write at night," he said. "Some wretch, racked with unbearable pain, screams out. It goes like a cold blade to the throat. It comes into my story like a death rattle in the midst of a wedding. Then I can work no longer."²

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 160.

2. " " " " " " "pp. 168-169.

through the bars of the iron gates. Dick's mother was not even permitted to see her son's face in death. Porter understood the prison's atmosphere and the suffering of the men in prison. He suffered mentally for them - their pain tore his heart. Prison makes one feel in his judgment. "This soft, golden" relation was one of the precious traits of Porter's character. It was his friend even though his blood dignity forbade familiarity. In the penitentiary he was universally respected. The nearest outpost in the ranges felt honored to serve him.¹

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1. A. J. Jennings, "THROUGH THE RANGES WITH C. PORTER," p. 106.
2. "The Prisoner," p. 106-107.

Much material for his stories, Porter gathered from prisoners as he made his night rounds of the cells. He had a wonderful memory for details, he used no notebook, but pigeon-holed his stories in his mind where they could be found when needed. Raidler and Jennings related in detail many of their daring achievements even to the slang expressions used. They also told him stories of the prisoners, but Porter never desired any one to point out a story to him. Often he would leave a copy of a story on Jennings's desk for inspection before he sent it out. Then they would jest about the price he would receive for it.

One night Porter sat on a high stool in the post office and read one of his stories "THE CHRISTMAS CHAPARRAL" to the robbers. When he had finished he "sat silent, pleased, his eyes aglow with happy satisfaction.'Gentlemen, many thanks. I never expected to win tears from experts of your profession,' he said at last."¹ Instantly Raidler and Jennings acknowledged Porter a genius. Porter sent this story to a publisher, but it was returned; Porter was blue. Then he confessed, "I should not like to be a beggar, Colonel, and my pen is the only investment I can make. I am continually paying assessments on it. I would like to collect a few dividends."²

¹Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 123.
²Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 204.

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At Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. LARRY."
 P. 128.
 At Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. LARRY."
 P. 204.

- Release from Prison

Although Porter was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, his term was shortened to three years and three months as a result of good behavior. When his term of service became less than a year, he began to make preparations for leaving. His friends, although glad for his sake, were aware of the loss they were to sustain when he was gone. When only seven days remained before his release, Porter was treated like a king; he was given the best chair, a cushion, and a footstool.

Jennings came in one night saying, "Gee, Bill, I ain't a gonna die, am I? Feel my pulse."¹ It was burlesque, but underneath was the sadness of farewell. As the number of days decreased Porter became "excited and full of nervous gaiety. His whispering hesitant voice took on a chirp and his serene face was jaunty with happiness."²

The next stage of his preparation was to have a suit of clothes made by the penitentiary tailors. "I feel like a bride getting a trousseau. I'm so particular about the send-off this paternal roof is going to give me."³

"Use your influence, Colonel, and get me a good-looking business suit. I'll leave it to your judgment, but pick me out a rich brown." The suit was made faultless even to Porter's eyes and he had a dress

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 250.
 2. " " " " " " " " p. 251.
 3. " " " " " " " " " "

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The next stage of his preparation was to have a suit of clothes made by the penitentiary tailor. "I feel like a bride getting a tuxedo." It was particularly about the head-off this material was going to give me.

"Use your influence, Colonel, and get me a good-looking business suit. I'll leave it to your judgment, but give me out a rich brown." The suit was made tailors even to Porter's eyes and he had a dress

2. At Jackson, "through the shadow of night," p. 250
 3. "I feel like a bride getting a tuxedo." p. 251
 4. "Use your influence, Colonel, and get me a good-looking business suit. I'll leave it to your judgment, but give me out a rich brown." p. 252

represented the right before the left. The square
pendantly shoes prevented a slight retreat, and
Porter's were no exception.

"I'll make quite a noise in the world, Colonel.
I'm bringing my own brass band along."

"You're bound to make a noise there, Bill."
He looked more like a well-educated business man than
an exconvict.

The next morning, July 8, 1901, he was given
his discharge papers and \$150 dollars. He had besides,
sixty or seventy dollars, proceeds from his last story,
in his pocket. Jennings stood in the reception room
that never-to-be-forgotten morning. "I'll meet you
in New York, Colonel. You might meet the printer there
before me. I'll be on the watch. Goodbye, Al." He
did not look back but walked directly out of the building.
Bridges came off the elevator saying, "Another day gone
into night."

Porter went immediately to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
where Mr. and Mrs. Roach and his daughter, Margaret, were
living at the time. Mr. Roach fitted up a room in "The
Iron Front Hotel" of which he was manager, for the sole
use of Porter as an office. Here in seclusion in the
city, he continued to write, but it was not long until
he received an invitation from Mr. William Hall, associate
editor of "ALBANY'S MAGAZINE" to come to New York and

write stories for this magazine.

Life in New York

In the spring of 1902 Porter accepted Mr. Hall's invitation. Porter's prison experience had given him confidence in himself as a writer of short stories; he had a desire to "get into the game" and a consciousness that he could play it; he wanted to give Margaret the best possible education. "The road lay through the short story with New York as his Workshop."¹

- His Debut in The Metropolis as A Short Story Writer

The morning after his arrival in the metropolis, he appeared in the office of "AINSLIE'S MAGAZINE" a "stalky, sandy, pallid-faced chap, fastidiously dressed, low-voiced, modest,"² and with great personal simplicity. He wore a dark suit, a bright four-in-hand tie, carried a black, high-crowned derby, and walked with a noiseless, springy step. The opinions Mr. Richard Duffy and Mr. Gilman Hall "had formed of him from his letters, his handwriting, his stories, vanished before the impression of the actual man."³ They felt his reticence in meeting him, not that of social timidity but of deliberateness. He took in the whole "you" at a glance. The conference was brief, but the next morning he returned with a story. This was the beginning of his fame as a writer of short stories.

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 174.

2. New York Editors, "Discoverers of O. Henry",
MENTOR 11:38.

3. New York Editors, "Discoverers of O. Henry",
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1. G. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY DISCOVERY", p. 174.
2. New York Editors, "Discoveries of O. Henry",
NEWTON 11:38.
3. New York Editors, "Discoveries of O. Henry",
NEWTON 11:39.

"THE NEW YORK WORLD" desiring some contributions from him sent Mr. Robert Davis to find him and offer him \$40, \$50, or possibly \$60 for a story. Mr. Davis found him on the fourth floor of a hotel on Twenty-fourth Street sitting at a wash bowl washing some pears. Porter rose with considerable dignity and said,

"'Come in, mister.'
 "'I'm looking,' said Mr. Davis, 'for Mr. Sydney Porter - otherwise O. Henry.'
 "'I'm both,' said he. 'Sit down, have some fruit. What can I do for you?'" Mr. Davis stated his proposition beginning with the last first.
 "'If that last proposition is the best,' said O. Henry, 'you needn't make the other two. I accept. Moreover, mister, you can have the balance of the 1
 pears.'"

Thus began his connections with the "NEW YORK WORLD". Later he made a year's contract for a story a week at \$100 each. Today the same stories would bring \$1,000 or \$1,500 each.

With these contracts O. Henry began to write in earnest. During 1904 he wrote sixty-five stories, or one every five and one-half days. In 1905 he wrote fifty stories. No other period of his life was so productive. Of the one hundred fifteen stories, all but twenty-one appear in the "NEW YORK WORLD"; all but sixteen deal either directly or indirectly with New York City.

- Starting Life Over

Twice in his lifetime O. Henry started life over. He had been accused of robbing a bank in Austin

"THE NEW YORK WORLD" dealing with connections

from his hand Mr. Robert Davis to him and after this
\$20,000, or possibly \$30,000 for a story. Mr. Davis told
him on the fourth floor of a hotel on Twenty-Second
Street sitting at a wash bowl making some papers. Robert
rose with considerable dignity and said:

"Come in, Robert."
"I'm looking," said Mr. Davis, for
Mr. Robert Porter - of course G. Henry.
"I'm back," said he. "Sit down."
"Have some lunch," said Mr. Porter.
"No," said Mr. Davis. "I've already
beginning with the last time."
"If that last proposition is the
best," said G. Henry, "you needn't make
the other two. I accept. Moreover,
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- Starting Life Over -

Twice in his lifetime G. Henry started life
over. He had been accused of robbing a bank in Seattle.
I. New York Editors, "Discoveries of G. Henry," NEW YORK 11:30

and had fled to Central America to make a new start in life. The second time was when he left the prison in Columbus and went to New York as an author.

"He had his secret which he determined to keep. He had been caught in the web of things, but he had another life to live for and hope was strong and confidence still stronger within him."¹

"There are men.....to whom life is a reversible coat, seamy on both sides. His had been seamy on only one side; the inner side was still intact. The dream and vision had remained with him. He had suffered much, but the texture of life still seemed sound to him. There was no sense of disillusionment. No friend had failed him; no friend ever failed him. So far from losing interest in life, he was rather rededicated to it.

"Nothing so testifies to the innate nobleness of O. Henry's nature as the utter absence of bitterness in his disposition after three years in Columbus. These years had done their work, but it was constructive, not destructive work. His charity was now as boundless as the air and his sympathy with suffering, especially when the sufferer was seemingly down and out, as prompt and instinctive as the glance of the eye."²

- Definite Use of His Nom de Plume = to Conceal His Identity

The first thing O. Henry did when he left Columbus was to use an assumed name to conceal his identity and to put the past irrevocably behind him. Some of his stories had previously been signed by such names as S. H. Peters, James L. Bliss, T. B. Dowd, Howard Clark, and Olivier Henry, but when he arrived in New York and began to write professionally, he chose to

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 167.
2. " " " " " " pp. 167-168.

and had tried to convince America to make a new effort
in life. The second time was when he left the prison
in Colombia and went to New York as an author.

"He had his secret which he determined
to keep. He had been caught in the web
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riverside coast, seamy on both sides.
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Positive Use of His New Name - to Conceal His Identity

The first thing O. Henry did when he left
Colombia was to use an assumed name to conceal his
identity and to put the final irrevocably behind him
some of his stories had previously been signed by such
names as E. H. Peters, James E. Hiss, J. B. Lewis,
Howard Glavin, and Oliver Bondy, but when he arrived in
New York and began to write professionally, he chose to

hide behind the name O. Henry which he did to the end.

In a letter to Al Jennings in 1902 he said, "Keep my nom de plume to yourself. I don't want anyone to know just yet."¹ Five years later when Jennings went to New York to visit his old friend, he called at the Players Club and asked Robert Davis, editor of the "NEW YORK WORLD", where he could find William Sidney Porter. Mr. Davis did not know him. A few minutes later when asked if he knew O. Henry, he answered affirmatively.

Once when asked by an editor what the "O" in his name represented he replied, "When I have done something worth while it will be time enough to decide."²

He was so determined that no one should discover his identity that he refused to give even the slightest information concerning himself to "Who's Who", and it was not until after his death that it became generally known, that William Sidney Porter and O. Henry were identical.

- Learning the City - Gathering Story Material

= Frequents Cheap Restaurants, Saloons, and Cafes

It was O. Henry's belief that no one could write stories by merely sitting at his desk and thinking, but that contact with men and women was essential if the stories were to ring true to life. To gain story

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 264.

2. New York Editors, "Discoverers of O. Henry", MENTOR 11:38.

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- Extract from City - Gathering Story Material

- Proposals Given Restaurant, Saloons, and

Cafes

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1. A Jennings, "Through the Shadow with O. Henry",

p. 224.

2. New York Editors, "Discoveries of O. Henry",

March 11:38.

material he wandered over much of New York City, everywhere, anywhere the spirit moved him; anywhere he thought a story might be suggested - it might be in "Hell's Kitchen" or in "Heaven's Vestibule". Night is the time that reveals secrets, so night after night O. Henry visited cheap restaurants, saloons, and night clubs - those dens in the crowded parts of the city where hungry, weary, heart-sick, and dejected souls congregated to mingle with others in similar circumstances, gain sympathy from each other, and enjoy in their way the glare of the lights, the cheap music, and other entertainments that these places afford. It was within these environments that O. Henry gained much of the material or suggestions for his stories. When he entered these establishments he adopted or searched out their moods, gained the confidence of his subjects, treated them to a drink or a meal, adopted their style of conversation and naturally caused them to disclose their troubles or experiences that were vital to them. To O. Henry, these people seemed like battered storm-tossed ships on the ocean of night; they haunted him.

Not every experience suggested a story but each had its general effect upon our author. One night a ragged, hungry-looking, seventeen year old girl came out of the shadow frightened. O. Henry and his friend assuring her that neither of them was a policeman, took her to Mouquin's restaurant. There was nothing unusual in the girl, but the spark of

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 a policeman, took her to Koppelman's restaurant. There
 was nothing unusual in the girl, but the spark of

light in her face when the meal came was enough to repay her host. "That's the story Yes, it's more of a story than will ever be written," he remarked.¹

Another night he said to Jennings, "I scent an idea tonight, colonel. Let's go forth and track it down."² It was rainy, and they smelled the mingled odors of stale beer, cabbage, and beans. They went into paltry halls with sawdust on the floors and chipped salt cellars on the deeply scarred tables. "It's not here. Let's go to O'Reilly's. I don't like the fragrance of these dago jointsWe'll find it here."³ Men were standing at the bar and gaudily dressed, cheaply jeweled women were sitting at the tables. The two men sat down, and then O. Henry called to him two shabbily dressed girls with a piercing glare of hunger in their eyes, and ordered four beers; then he took them to the Caledonia Hotel where he ordered a good full meal for them. It was then after one o'clock in the morning.

"Do you make much coin?" he asked.⁴

"Ain't nothin' to be made." They were eating their food. "All we can get is enough to pay our two dollars a week for a room. An' if we're lucky we eat and if we ain't we starve, 'cept we meet sporty gents like yourselves. You don't know what it is to be

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p.281
2. " " " " " " " " "pp.283-284.
3. " " " " " " " " "p.284.
4. " " " " " " " " "p.286.

hungry," Sue said quietly "You ain't suffered as we have."

"I guess we ain't. It's kind o' hard to get a footing here, I suppose."

"Well, you guessed it that time. Sure is. If you come through with your skin, you're lucky. And if you're soft, you die.... That's what Sadie done. Her and me come from Vermont together. We thought we could sing." They sang in a chorus during the winter, but at the close of the season were discharged, with no other work in view. We're "hungry everlastin'," she said. Sadie kept hoping and praying that Bob Parkins would come and get her as he promised he would if she did not succeed. Sue found work, but Sadie refused to leave her room. At the end of two weeks Sue came home to find Sadie gone. She had "given up hopin' for Bob and just made away with herself. Took the gas route in that very room where we used to stay."¹

"I guess Bob never showed up, did he?"

"Yes, he turned up one day. Said he'd been lookin' high and low for us. Been to every boarding house in the town searchin' for Sade. I hated to tell him. Gee, he never said a word for the longest time. Then he asked me all about Sade and why she hadn't let him know. I told him everything. All he said was 'Here, Sue, buy yourself some grub.'"

"He gave me five dollars and me and Mame paid the rent and we been eatin' on it ever since. That was

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 288

"hungry," she said quietly. "You ain't suffered as we have."

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"Here, she, buy yourself some grub."

"He gave me five dollars and me and Wade paid the rent and we been sitting on it ever since. That was

a week ago. I haven't seen Bob since. He was awful cut up about it."

O. Henry was so preoccupied with this story that he was not aware when the girls left.

Another day when they dined at a German restaurant they noticed on the stair landing a quaint figure dressed as an ancient Halberdier. "It's a good story," he said, and before noon the next day the story was written.

The restaurant was his "coign of vantage", and here he liked to watch the would-be Bohemian. "As a genial and immensely amused spectator he would sit night after night amid these children of illusion and find a satisfaction and stimulation in their behavior that real Bohemia was powerless to furnish." ¹ New York furnished him with what he sought, "he took it, enjoyed it, and was grateful - and maintained his equilibrium."² He frequently visited a little Hungary, Joel's, the Café Boulevard on Second Avenue, Café Francis on Thirty-fifth Street, Martin's, the Lafayette, Mouquin's, and Scheffel Hall on Eighteenth Street where "his demeanor was that of an amused spectator, and a recorder of human emotions but never that of a participant in the games."²

- Visits Small City Parks

Union Square, Madison Square, or Gramercy Park were always within walking distance of his rooms. These

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 189.

2. Archibald Sessions, "O. HENRY AS I KNEW HIM".

3. Note at Beginning of "THE VOICE OF THE CITY".

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Boulevard on Second Avenue, Café Francis on Thirty-fifth

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Visits to Old City Parks

Union Square, Madison Square, or Gramercy Park

were always within walking distance of his room. These

1. O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi," p. 150.
2. "The Gift of the Magi," O. Henry as a writer.
3. Note at beginning of "The Gift of the Magi."

parks were fascinating to him and provided innumerable captivating episodes for the teller of tales. Here, morning, afternoon, or evening, he spent much time and might be found sitting on the benches talking with the true bum, the distracted lover, the hungry loafer, or watching the society girl dressed as a working girl looking for diversion or for a thrill.

= His Interest in Working Girls

The underpaid working girl who lived constantly under a strain stirred his sympathy. In the evening when the business day ended, O. Henry might have been seen standing on a corner closely observing the ebb and flow of the multitudes of clerks and shopgirls forming innumerable groups, listening for the slightest word to catch his interest. Apparently indifferent he might follow a group, but with keen attention he would absorb every word of their conversation, or perhaps he would accompany one or two and thereby learn their trials, their economic and social problems, and their love affairs. They freely confided to him their financial difficulties, plainly showed their lack of proper and nourishing food, and described the crowded and unhealthful conditions of the houses and meager rooms where they lived. He learned that they entertained their male friends either on the street or in the city parks, because the house afforded no room in which to entertain company. Sometimes his compassion for these unfortunate homeless creatures would become so great that he would give parties for their

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 He learned that they entertained their male friends either
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 his compassion for these unfortunate homeless creatures
 would become so great that he would give parties for their

benefit. On these occasions many an interesting tale escaped the lips of his guests.

• Observes the Stream of Life

O. Henry always secured rooms near the heart of New York City where from his windows he could watch with keen understanding the procession of life in the city. Life was not monotonous to him; he was like one who stood in the world's highway while the shifting pageant of life swept by, each picture different, unexpected, developing new lights and shades. He once said he would like to live a lifetime on every street in New York because every house had a drama in it. The most distinctive and most thought-provoking aspect of his portrayal of New York "lies in his attempt to isolate and vivify the character, the service, the function of the city. Streets, parks, squares, buildings, even the multitudinous life itself that flowed ceaselessly before him were to him the outward and visible signs of a life that informed all and energized all." ¹ It was a combination of all the elements of the city compounded. The city may seem cold on the surface, but at heart it is "kindly, coöperative, organized for every need, efficient for instant help, human to the core."²

- "What's Around the Corner" Attitude

Adventure awaited O. Henry at every corner.

1. O. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 233
2. " " " " " " " " p. 235

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Observes the Nature of Life

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"What's Aboard the Copper" Abbots

Adventure awaited O. Henry at every corner.

"New York was an enchanted labyrinth, yielding at every twist the thrill of the unexpected - the wonderful."¹

"He had about him an air of suspense, of throbbing expectancy as though he had just concluded an adventure, or were about to set forth on one."² His very attitude as well as his low-pitched, droll and solemn voice piqued curiosity. This element of curiosity which he aroused in others, he possessed himself and is indicative of his longing to know what is just around the corner, and continually brought him face to face with some surprising and unexpected incident.

- 0. Henry's Character

- Life as a Comedy

It was the natural disposition of O. Henry to "keep on the sunny side of life." The experiences of this world held tragedy for him as well as for those about him, but he possessed the happy faculty of disposing of tragedy lightly and stressing the cheerfulness, the humor, the comedy of life. O. Henry saw that tragedy holds no sting for the one who looks beyond and sees the comedy of the situation. Sometimes when a discussion among his friends became over-ardent, a clever and sagacious remark from O. Henry would change tragedy to comedy. This attitude of mirth and caprice pervaded much of his character. In a short poem Christopher

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p.280
2. " " " " " " " " p.316

2. " " " " " " p.316

Morley calls him "the apothecary of human nature".¹

"O brave apothecary! You who know
What dark and acid doses life prefers,
And yet with smiling face resolved to
brew
The sparkling potions for your
customers
Glowing with globes of red and purple
glass
Your window gladdens travelers that
pass."

2

= Whimsical Nature

"O. Henry dreaded pathos..... He delighted in whim, wit, and inversion." He liked to play a different role than the one he actually was; he did this and saw others doing it, too. Many incidents in his life indicate his whimsicality, not the least of which was his selection of a pen name. His preparations for leaving the penitentiary and his actual leave-taking show the carefree quality of a whimsical man, as well as his first business connection with Mr. Robert Davis, editor of "THE NEW YORK WORLD", all of which have been described on preceding pages.

O. Henry's answers to notes from his editors concerning late stories often evaded the subject by such a reply as

"What you say? Let's take an evening off and strike the Café Francis for a slight refection. I like to be waked up suddenly there by music and look across at the red-haired woman eating smelts under an original by Glackens. Peace for yours."

3

1. Edward Francis Mohler, "The City of Too Many Caliphs", CATHOLIC WORLD, III:760.
2. " " " " III:761.
3. William Johnston, "Disciplining O. Henry", BOOKMAN 52:537

Another time "by way of explaining his dilatoriness in delivering a story when due, he wrote: 'Being entirely out of tune with the muse, I went out and ameliorated the condition of a shop girl so far as a planked steak could do so.'"¹

Again his excuse might be a visitor, dizziness on rising, or a thrilling account of "Dr. Bright and his justly celebrated disease."

His renaming of New York City with such names as Little Old Bagdad-On-The-Subway, The City of Too Many Caliphs, Noisyville-On-The-Hudson, Wolfville-On-The-Subway, and The City of Chamelon Changes indicate a whimsical trend.

Even sickness did not drive away this lightness of mood. He suffered a year or more before he died. Early in 1910 he said to a friend referring to his approaching death, "It'll probably be 'In the Good Old Summer Time'."² When the end was in view, he was asked what name should be announced in the papers. "Call me Dennis," he said, "my name will be Dennis in the morning." Then changing his mind he said, "No, say Will S. Parker is here." "The taking of his old initials and the name 'Will'," said O. Henry's friend, "was a whim of the most whimsical of men."

Even in death this mood was with him. He died in the early morning just as day was dawning, and

1. William Johnston, "DISCIPLINING O. HENRY", BOOKMAN 52:537.
2. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 250.

Another time "by way of explaining his situation"

was in delivering a story when one, his winter, being
entirely out of tune with the music, I went out and met-
termed the condition of a shoe girl so far as a pleasant
atmosphere could be so.

Again his excuse might be a visitor, business
on his part, or a thrilling account of "The Night and the
Day" repeated himself.

His reputation of New York City with such names
as Little Old Bayard-on-the-Highway, The City of the Many
Ladies, Kew-Forest-on-the-Highway, Kew-Forest-on-the-
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will," said O. Henry's friend, "was a whim of the last
moment of men."

Even in death this mood was with him. He died
in the early morning just as day was dawning, and

realizing the end was near "he said with a smile to those about him: 'Turn up the lights; I don't want to go home in the dark.'"¹

= Extensive Newspaper Reader

Besides having an intimate knowledge of classical literature, O. Henry from his youth was an inveterate reader of the newspaper absorbing all the news of his day as well as cataloguing and pigeon-holing catch words and contemporary slang expressions, detached and peculiar information (national and international), and popular songs of the day. Quite regularly he visited a saloon in New York where he would sit and drink and read the newspaper.

= Sympathy for the Unfortunate

O. Henry's prison experience, instead of making him hard-hearted, made him peculiarly sympathetic with the unfortunate. In the silent hours of the night when he heard the sighs and groans of the sufferers in the hospital, the shrieks of those being punished below, and the tales of suffering and oppression inflicted on the prisoners by the prison authorities, O. Henry was crushed, and determined, as far as it was possible for him, to alleviate some of the misery of the world.

One day a man on the street asked him for help. O. Henry put his hand in his pocket and pressed into the man's hand the only piece of money he had - a twenty dollar bill. Believing a mistake had been

1. G. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 250.

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I. C. Alphonse Smith, "O. Henry Biography", p. 220.

made, the man returned to his benefactor; but it was no mistake. O. Henry could not say, "No."

= The Money Question

He himself was often penniless. He had no conception of the value of money. It slid through his fingers, not because of any personal extravagance but because of his generosity to others, which although it beggared O. Henry financially, brought him a wealth of experience and satisfaction which were of more value to him than the economic value ever could be. He liked money but he liked to spend it.

Another time he put a ten dollar bill into a book he gave a girl. When she returned with it he said, "It's yours, Sue, for I know it isn't mine. But say some day I might be hard up and I'll come around and get you to stake me a meal. And if you're out of luck, ring this bell."¹

Four times while Al Jennings visited him in New York, O. Henry took him to a rough, unattractive saloon which Jennings did not appreciate, and when questioned why he frequented that joint replied, "I'm broke, colonel, and the bartender knows me. My credit there is unlimited."²

"Prince then pauper, prodigal one day - broke the next. Whim was his bookkeeper. It piled up a big deficit on the prosy, matter-of-fact side of

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY"
pp. 306-307.
2. " " " " " " " " " " " "
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up a big deficit on the proxy, master-of-the-side of

the ledger, but it splashed the inner realer pages with a bounteous unaccountable credit."¹

Although O. Henry liked money, he could not be moved a hair's breadth by dangling it before him. On one occasion he received from a certain publisher a check for \$1,000 with a note asking him for a story. In earlier years this company had returned the stories he had submitted to it. He now addressed an envelope, enclosed the check, walked out into the hall, and mailed it.

= Few Friends, But True Ones

In times of financial embarrassments, O. Henry's editors were his friends to whom he was never embarrassed to appeal for money, and who invariably rendered him material assistance.

O. Henry did not make friends easily. He disliked crowds or large groups, but with a few friends his vivacity became boundless. In New York his intimate friends were the magazine editors of his stories, principally, Richard Duffy, Gilman Hall, Bannister Merwin, and Robert Davis, with whom he was never confidential, but whose fellowship he enjoyed at clubs and dinners, and their companionship at all times.

= His Reticence

Reticence was O. Henry's most notable quality. From childhood to manhood, as a schoolboy, a druggist, on the ranch, in Honduras, in prison, as a writer in

1. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHADOWS WITH O. HENRY", p. 315.

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His Beliefs

Beliefs was O. Henry's most notable quality.
From childhood he was a schoolboy, a struggler,
on the verge, in doubt, in prison, as a writer in
I. Al Jennings, "THROUGH THE SHARDS WITH O. HENRY," p. 215.

New York, O. Henry was silent on his own behalf. He listened to the stories and troubles of others, but he shared his with no one. His most intimate friend, Al Jennings, did not know, until O. Henry had been in New York several years, the real cause of his friend's prison sentence. No one in the metropolis knew him better than Mr. Hall; yet he never mentioned his secret to him and it was not until after his death that Mr. Hall learned of it. One could sit a long time with O. Henry and not feel the necessity of talking. He seldom gave any information about himself. He never told the story of his life; he related only scattered events in it. He always lived in the present, seldom looking back to the past, nor very far forward into the future. When asked about a story he would say it was "progressing".

O. Henry did not care to meet a man merely because he was a celebrity, nor would he permit any one to meet him as such. If the latter happened, he would speak in Spanish, the Pan-American dialect, or use such poor English, that the caller, by whom he was bored, was glad to take his departure. One of his New York publishers says it was about as easy to induce him to go anywhere or to meet any one as it is to get a child to take medicine. Mr. H. P. Steger induced him to have his picture taken; but O. Henry was so reluctant even after consenting to it, that it took Mr. Steger one hour to get him ready, another hour to

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take him the two blocks to the photographers, and then he was forced to pull and push him up the stairs. The two photographs were excellent so that Mr. Steger felt rewarded for his efforts.

O. Henry was "a man of innate shyness, who perpetually cloaked his personality with a gentle reserve that seldom was penetrated."¹ He was lovable, gentle, talented, had no intimate friends, "none to whom he would reveal himself without reserve, to whom he confided his hopes, his ambitions, his estimate of himself."² Margaret says that she and her father were "friends of few words and great understanding."³ She thinks her father's reserve was "the outward manifestation of a passionate desire to be wholly and only himself. Against the intrusion of more aggressive personalities an invisible barrier was erected. It was a polite 'No trespassing' sign."

One evening in North Carolina in 1910 among a group of old friends he impersonated in speech and actions many of his friends and famous personages. There was much gaiety. Suddenly he disappeared. Margaret found him sitting on the porch. She sat down near him, but neither spoke. After a while both rose and went indoors, neither speaking. The day he returned to New York so many emotions crowded in, that words seemed

1. William Johnston, "Disciplining O. Henry",
BOOKMAN 52:536.

2. Margaret Porter Cesare, "My O. Henry", MENTOR 11:17.

3. " " " " " " " " 11:18.

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O. Henry was "a man of innate dignity, who
necessarily looked his personality with a gentle reserve
that seldom was penetrated." He was always gentle,
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1. William Somerset Maugham, "O. Henry".
2. Maugham, "O. Henry", 1914.
3. Maugham, "O. Henry", 1914.

impotent things in the face of a final parting, for so it seemed to both. "Bill," he said, for that is what he called her, "Bill." "'I have seen' she managed to say, '- and understand.' There flashed across his face an expression of inestimable relief and one of his rare smiles."¹

Death in New York - Poor Health

Throughout his life O. Henry had never had very good health, but he had been sick for more than a year before his death. He did not complain, but frequent changes of environment were necessary. His letters reveal the fact that he had "'writer's cramp,' another name for failing health."²

- Went to North Carolina

In the fall of 1909 and the spring of 1910 he spent six months in Asheville, North Carolina, with his wife, whom he had married in November, 1907, and his daughter. As he was broken in health and was suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, the doctors of Asheville advocated plenty of fresh air and suggested that he take vigorous physical exercise, such as walking over the neighboring hills and mountains which he carried out faithfully but with no successful results. In the spring of 1910 he returned to the metropolis with little ambition to work.

1. Margaret Porter Cesare, "My O. Henry", MENTOR 11:20.
2. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 246.

important things in the face of a final parting, for he
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 year before his death. He did not complain, but
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1. Margaret Porter Hesser, "My G. Henry", NEW YORK 11:20.
 2. G. O. Stephens Smith, "G. O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 248.

- Back in New York

"On the afternoon of June 3, 1910, Mr. Glavin Hall received a telephone message: 'Can you come down right away, Colonel?'"

He had collapsed after sending the message

and was lying on the floor when Mr. Hall arrived. Dr.

Charles Russell Hancock was called and G. Henry was taken

to the Polytechnic Hospital on Twenty-fourth Street. On

the way out

"he insisted on stopping to shake hands with the manager of the Galton and to exchange a hearty good-bye. He asked that his family be sent for and then quietly gave directions about the disposition of his papers."

- Death

"He was perfectly conscious until within two minutes of his death on Sunday morning," June 3, said Dr. Hancock, "and he knew that he was approaching. I never saw a man give up in feeling or in breathing again. Nothing seemed to worry him at the last. There was no pain at the last and just before he died he said with a smile to those about him: 'Turn up the lights; I don't want to go home in the dark.' He died as he had lived. His last words coincided with a concert hall song, the catch word of the street, the last of the department store. He did not go home in the dark. The sunlight was upon his face when he passed and illumined still his name and fame."

"The author was buried from the little Church around the corner. By some strange chance, a marriage ceremony was scheduled for the same hour. The error was not discovered until the wedding and funeral party reached the church. Happiness visited

to sorrow, the little wedding party retiring to the consistory until the funeral service had taken place. It was just such a tangling of the light and dark thread of life that one finds in so many of O. Henry's stories." ¹

After the funeral a woman was seen to remain alone kneeling in prayer. She was one whom O. Henry had rescued from the undertow of the city, and restored.

"'I have always believed,' says a gifted writer, 'that it was not by accident that a wreath of laurel lay at the head of his coffin and a wreath₂ of lilies at his feet.'"

"O. Henry's life was a short one; but as Sir Walter Scott says:

'One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.'"³

1. George McAdam, "The Only Interview O. Henry Ever Gave", MENTOR 11:43.
2. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 191.
3. P. A. Sillard, "O. Henry: An Appreciation", CATHOLIC WORLD 115: 787.

III. GENERAL NATURE OF O. HENRY'S LITERARY MATTER AND MANNER

Number of Volumes and Stories

This American short story writer whom Professor William Lyons Phelps places among the first five in our literary history is the author of two hundred fifty-one short stories which were written in the remarkably short space of eight years. In consideration of this vast output and the high quality of the stories, their various moods, and their wide appeal to all classes of people, these stories have been collected, arranged according to subject matter, and published in thirteen volumes. In 1931, however, all these books were combined into one volume entitled "THE COMPLETE WORKS OF O. HENRY". The titles of the separate volumes together with the years of their publication follow: "CABBAGES AND KINGS", 1904; "THE FOUR MILLION", 1906; "THE TRIMMED LAMP", 1907; "HEART OF THE WEST", 1907; "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", 1908; "THE GENTLE GRAFTER", 1908; "ROADS OF DESTINY" and "OPTIONS", 1909; "STRICTLY BUSINESS" and "WHIRLIGIGS", 1910; "SIXES AND SEVENS", 1911; "ROLLING STONES", 1913; "WAIFS AND STRAYS", 1917.

O. Henry has won his place in literature through the writing of short stories alone. Stephen Leacock remarks that O. Henry will soon be recognized as one of the great masters of modern literature. In his stories he has exceeded all other writers in variety and range of appeal. He has reached all classes of people - those

who work with their brains, those who work with their hands, and those who work with both, the ultra-conservative, the ultra-radical, the critical, the uncritical, the bookman and the business man, the rich, the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the young and the old. People find in his stories "what they need - a range of fancy, an exuberance of humor, a sympathy, an understanding, a knowledge of the raw material of life, an ability to interpret the passing in terms of the permanent, an insight into individual and institutional character, a resolute and pervasive desire to help those in need of help, in a word, a constant and essential democracy that they find in no other short story writer."¹

Distinctly American - In Setting

America in its manifold aspects forms the background for practically all of his stories. Scarcely another author has been so partial to his native land or his continent. His wide traveling and transient residences in several sections of the United States and Central America made it possible with his observing eye and comprehending genius, to see the individual and collective traits, eccentricities, and characteristics of the inhabitants of these regions.

- In Material

He pictures the languid, carefree refugee in the sultry, sleepy climate of Honduras, the daring

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 15.

who work with their hands, those who work with their
hands, and those who work with both, the ultra-conserv-
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Indirectly American - In Setting

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residence in several sections of the United States and
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and comprehensive genius to see the individual and
collective traits, eccentricities, and characteristics
of the inhabitants of these regions.

- In Material

He pictures the jungle, carter's refuge in
the solitary, sleepy climate of Honduras, the daring
I. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. Henry's Biography", p. 12.

desperadoes and the hardy rancher of the Texas chaparral and the West, the spirit of the typical old Southerner, the spirit of the city, the problems of the American clerk, shop girl, tramp, lover, the apartment house owner, the city stranger, with the hand of an artist. His studied and unusual use of slang, his humor, exaggeration, adventure, and practical jokes of the West are all distinctly American characteristics. North, South, and West, all but New England, form settings for his unique stories. Sometimes he contrasts region with region, but "it is one of his distinctions that he is fair to both."¹ He pitted characteristic against characteristic, foible against foible, an excess against a defect, and a defect against an excess with a genial and equal-handed justice and satire that suggests "a nationalism in which North, West, and South are to play their necessary parts. It is not a question of abdication; it is a question of give and take."² Instead of pitting class against class, he reveals class to class, region to region.

"He seems to say, 'You think the other fellow is funny. Well, you are just as funny as he.' Americanism is not a matter of geography. It is a spirit, a mood, a temperament, an attitude toward men and things and a way of looking at life, of expressing life, of achieving life."³

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", p. 240.

2. " " " " " " " "

3. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. Henry, The Man and His Work", MENTOR 11:8.

Types - Social

O. Henry has enlarged the area of the short story in his range of social themes. Day after day among the multitude he observed the diverse social phenomena, man in his relations with man and institutions, his struggle with good and evil forces, everything that entered as an essential factor into social life. He more than any other author made himself the champion of the clerk and the shop-girl believing her to be an essential part of the city's larger life. He believed she belonged to the class of people he designated as "under a strain" and his interest in her and his sympathy for her grew as his knowledge of her surroundings increased. The anecdotal quality of O. Henry's stories made it possible for him to picture the romance of New York streets and her common life as no one else has succeeded in doing. He took the drab lives of the tramp, the clerk, the waitress, and the shopgirl and has put them into a romantic setting of tragedy or comedy.

A city to O. Henry was not a municipality but a personality. In his survey of human life cities occupy a large place. In his hasty journey around South America the coastal town was studied and in his books the city is an important factor. Mr. Elias Lieberman in "O. HENRY: IN MEMORIUM" has beautifully expressed his sentiments on this

Tyler - - Book I

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type of the author's stories.

"What a world he left behind him, what a
web of wonder tales,
Fact and fiction subtly woven on the
spinning wheel of Truth!
How he caught the key of living in the
noises of the town,
Major music, minor dirges, rhapsodies
of Age and Youth!
In the twilight of the city, as I
dreamed, as I dreamed,
Watching that eternal drama in the
ever-pulsing street,
All about me seemed to murmur of the
master passed away,
And his requiem was sounded in the
city's fever beat."¹

His belief in the brotherhood of man is evidenced in the title "THE FOUR MILLION" and it is exemplified in his stories.

- Humor - Comedy

A typically American humor and American comedy pervades the majority of O. Henry's stories. Much of the humor comes from the paradoxes and contrasts which may be found in our mixed population and civilization, and from his use of satire and irony. In the application of over-statement, diverting and diverted quotations, and verbal audacities he made the English language a servant to this end. Humor and comedy are produced, also, by the unique characters that he chooses and the peculiar situations in which they are placed. The characters are inherently capricious and they speak and act spontaneously without

1. C. Alphonso Smith, "O. HENRY BIOGRAPHY", pp. 226-227.

type of the author's stories.

"What a world he left behind him, what a
 web of misery failed,
 feet and fists a wretchedly woven on the
 spinning wheel of fate,
 how he caught the key of living in the
 noise of the town,
 major music, minor things, the passions
 of life and death
 in the twilight of the city, as I
 dreamed, as I dreamed,
 watching that eternal dream in the
 ever-changing street,
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O. Henry's "The Four Million", pp. 250-251.

consideration or premeditation; humor is released, not manufactured. The author's singularity in combining the romantic and the ridiculous produces the comedy of the situation. O. Henry is essentially an optimist; and his humor is not harsh, cynical, nor derisive, but is humane because it is fundamentally human.

- Surprise Endings

A large proportion of the comedies have a surprise at the end. As one reads these stories he believes he has anticipated the logical conclusion, but suddenly there is a reasonable but wholly unexpected turn at the end which leaves the reader gasping with surprise. O. Henry's distinctive contribution to the short story is the unexpected ending. He is a master in the art of the rapid and concise unraveling of plot. From the beginning he perceives the end and every part of the plot is so deftly unfolded as to justify the clash of the unexpected but inevitable conclusion.

- Problem

Many of O. Henry's stories deal with some particular social or economic problems that the four million of the national metropolis faced daily. The masses of people who figure in the census were neither sub-normal nor abnormal to O. Henry. As he strolled and loitered about the city he discovered that every one has a problem of some kind to solve, and that each problem, economic or otherwise, is important to its owner. The problem of the underpaid clerk and

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 one has a problem of some kind to solve, and that
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 its owner. The problem of the underpaid clerk and

of the shopgirl trying to meet even her meager expenses, the problem of their social contacts, the pathos of their meager education and their ignorance of the world were worthy of his attention.

Style - Mood Effects

Although O. Henry was a literary artist, he cared little for technical accuracy; but he did care much for the effect and the feeling his stories produced. As he transformed Central America into a land of mystery and wonder, so he transformed New York into a city of mystery and romance - a Bagdad-on-the-Subway with its soft suffusing lights. Corner drug stores become enchanted bazaars, the melody of the softened music of restaurants brings one into the very heart of the wonder-city where American business men at tables become dervishes, tourists masquerade as caliphs, and Western visitors become bedouins from Syria and fierce fantissins from the desert.

The mood of his work is dependent upon the mood of the author. The temper of the recent story he had heard from clerk, beggar, policeman, or lover, took on the same spirit in his reproduced story. Humor and pathos are so closely allied in many of the stories that it is difficult to distinguish where one ends and the other begins. There is in them a whimsicality produced by his uncommon use of slang expressions, by his unparalleled choice of words, by

of the shopkeeper trying to save even her master's expenses, the problem of their social contrast, the paradox of their meager education and their ignorance of the world were worthy of his attention.

Style - Mood Effects

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The mood of his work is dependent upon the mood of the author. The temper of the recent story he had heard from clerk, beggar, policeman, or lover. Look on the same spirit in his repeated story. Humor and action are so closely allied in many of his stories that it is difficult to distinguish where one ends and the other begins. There is in them a whimsicality produced by his occasional use of slang expressions, by his unrefined choice of words, by

the odd bits of information slipped in unexpectedly here and there, by his unusual and surprising allusions to contemporary life and to classical and Biblical literature, as well as by the capricious conversation and behavior of the characters. By a few words or a short paragraph the mood, which is different in almost all of his stories, is brought out. O. Henry observed widely and felt deeply; he could detect the finest shades of difference and his stories are evidence of the many moods of which one is capable.

- Character Sketches

Personalities and characters are revealed with "a glowing of the imagination and a depth of understanding of the human heart such as only a genius can make manifest."¹ Each character was a revelation to O. Henry, for he perceived that everyone had had different experiences than the ones he had had, and he felt he could learn something from each. Two kinds of people especially interested him: those who were under a strain, who stirred his sympathy; and those who were under a delusion, who amused him greatly. Often character is portrayed by a few significant details or a brief paragraph. From the first stories unto the last ones, one can trace a long line of characters who traverse the far boundaries of life or cross the gulf stream of life's ocean.

1. Stephen Leacock, "THE AMAZING GENIUS OF O. HENRY", from "ESSAYS AND LITERARY STUDIES", p.246.

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- Unusual Plot

As a "plot maker" O. Henry is a genius. He holds in suspense the reader who scarcely realizes he is "suspended" until at the very end of the story the lights are turned on and "the whole tale is revealed as an entirety."¹

- Implied Moral

O. Henry is not a preacher but his stories seem to be woven around some large and accepted moral and he leaves the reader to form his own judgments. His stories encourage a high idealism and an aversion to anything indecent; they reveal a sensitiveness and a conscience. Specific circumstances and environment must be known in order to judge character, for it is hard to make a distinction between good and bad in some instances. In certain situations values must be modified or even reversed. O. Henry points out the necessity of being just in making judgments of deeds according to the level on which they are performed. Nobility, loyalty, and worth are principles for which he has profound respect.

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Unusual Plot

As a "plot maker" O. Henry is a genius. He holds in suspense the reader who scarcely realizes he is "suspended" until at the very end of the story the lights are turned on and "the whole tale is revealed as an anti-climax."

Implied Moral

O. Henry is not a preacher but his stories seem to be woven around some large and accepted moral and he leaves the reader to form his own judgments. His stories encourage a high idealism and an aversion to anything dishonest; they reveal a sensitiveness and a conscience. Specific circumstances and environment must be known in order to judge character, for it is hard to make a distinction between good and bad in some instances. In certain situations values must be shifted or even reversed. O. Henry tells out the necessity of being just in making judgments of deeds according to the level on which they are performed. Nobility, loyalty, and worth are principles for which he has profound respect.

IV. INFLUENCE OF O. HENRY'S LIFE AND CHARACTER ON HIS SHORT STORIES

With this background of O. Henry's life; his experiences, natural and designed; his characteristics; his eccentricities; and his wanderings from place to place, it may readily be seen, by reading his works, that practically every story he has written is, directly or indirectly, the result of some experience he has had. People he had seen or known and places where he had resided or visited as well as his moods and his emotional reaction to incident occupy an important place in his work. To verify these statements, stories or comments from stories will be used to illustrate each stage of the author's life.

Parental Influences

The earliest influence upon a child is that of his parents. Between parent and child a strong and vital relationship exists, a relationship fundamental and sacred which the parent will not willingly break. By the death of her husband, O. Henry's grandmother Porter was left with seven children; and by the death of his own mother his father was left with three sons. Both father and grandmother determined to keep their families together; they would part with none. These facts may have suggested "CHRISTMAS BY INJUNCTION"¹ in which Cherokee prepared a Christmas party for the children in a village which boasted not even a child. Two men drove out into the country to

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 188-194.

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gather children for the party. At one door their request for children received this reply,

"Me and the old woman have got seven kids,.....and runnin' my mind over the bunch, I don't appear to hit upon none that we could spare.....No, I couldn't with any degree of avidity, seem to fall in with the idea of lettin' none of 'em go. Thank you kindly, gentlemen."

Farther along the road Mrs. Wilson gathered her two children on her knee and would not even smile until her husband shook his head. Thirty or forty miles over the snow they rode trying to get children, but without success. Parents would not part with their children.

The next part of the same story suggests that the author himself may have had the feeling of neglected paternal obligations when he was a refugee in Central America and had left his wife and child struggling for existence back home. The conversation at the close is typical of his manner of address and shows his interest in a child's affairs. The last sentence, "Sit closer, son," carries with it a feeling of tenderness for the child, and a feeling of sadness for neglected duty on the part of the parent.

The story continues. At last the men secured the consent of one weary mother to take her ten year old son, who was the only child at the party. Cherokee in the guise of Santa Claus arrived, but Bobby was not interested. Cherokee took off his false face and talked with the boy. Bobby recognized his face as that on a

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interested. Charles took off his false face and talked

with the boy. Bobby recognized his face as that on a

picture which stood on his mother's dresser, and which he had once seen her kiss. Cherokee changed his clothes and drove the boy home that night.

"'Say,' said Bobby, 'I like you. I don't know why. Nobody ever made me do anything I didn't want to before.'

"'Tell me, kid,' said Cherokee.....'are you sure your mother kissed that picture that looks like me?'

"'Dead sure. I seen her do it.'

"'Didn't you remark somethin' a while ago about wantin' a rifle?'

"'You bet I did. Will you get me one?'

"'Tomorrow - silvermounted.'

"Cherokee took out his watch.

"'Half-past nine. We'll hit the Junction plumb on time with Christmas Day. Are you cold? Sit closer, son.'"

A quotation from "THE FIFTH WHEEL"¹ indicates O. Henry's regret concerning his inability to support his wife and child who had to go to her parents' home while he was in Central America.

"'I've been out of work for a year.....My wife and kid had to go back to her mother..... and I haven't a cent. That's my tale of woe.'

"'Tough luck,' said Thomas. 'A man alone can pull through all right. But I hate to see the women and kids get the worst of it.'"²

As a father, O. Henry understood the importance to a child of a lost favorite toy and that no effort or expense was too great to recover it. "Compliments of the Season"³ may have had its origin in his own tireless

1. "STRICTLY BUSINESS," pp. 1175-1182
2. " " " p. 1176
3. " " " pp. 1225-1231

picture which stood on his mother's dresser, and which
 he had once seen her kiss. Charlotte changed his clothes
 and drove the boy home that night.

"Say," said Henry, "I like you. I don't
 know why. Nobody ever made me do anything I
 didn't want to before."
 "Tell me, kid," said Charlotte, "are you
 sure your mother kissed that picture that looks
 like her?"
 "Good sure. I seen her do it."
 "Didn't you remark something a while ago
 about wanting a wife?"
 "You bet I did. Will you let me out?"
 "Tomorrow - all right."
 "Charlotte took out his watch.
 "Half-past nine. Well, it's the time
 to go to bed with Christmas Eve. Are you cold?
 Sit closer, now."

A quotation from "THE FIVE THIRTY" indicates
 G. Henry's regret concerning his inability to support his
 wife and child who had to go to her parents' home while he
 was in Central America.

"I've been out of work for a year.....
 wife and kid had to go back to her mother.....
 and I haven't a cent. That's my tale of woe."
 "Tough luck," said Thomas. "A man alone can
 pull through all right. But I hate to see the
 women and kids get the worst of it."

As a father, G. Henry understood the importance
 to a child of a lost favorite toy and that no effort or
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 the season" may have had its origin in his own distress

1. "STRICTLY BUSINESS," pp. 1225-1228
2. " " " " pp. 1176
3. " " " " pp. 1225-1231

and costly efforts to get back into his daughter's possession a doll that never could be replaced.

Soon after Mrs. Porter's death, O. Henry was sent to prison and deprived of the guardianship of his daughter who was constantly in his mind although he rarely spoke of her. This paternal devotion is expressed in "LAW AND ORDER"¹ by Luke Summers who has been separated from his son whose custody he was given when his wife left, by these words: "I've never had that boy out of my mind one day or night since he was took away. But I never let on."

When O. Henry went to New York he observed that children living in apartment houses had no opportunity for free rollicking play like he had enjoyed as a child and he also perceived that parents were not always willing to devote time to romp and play with their children as they should. "THE GUILTY PARTY"² is the story of the tragic end of the life of a young girl whose mother did not want her to play on the streets and whose father would not have her in the house, so she was forced to find entertainment in the streets and saloons where she made crude friendships who dragged her down till she murdered her faithless lover and sought release in the waters of the East River. The story ends with a dream trial of the girl in the court of heaven where she is acquitted and the court officer declared "the guilty party.....is....."

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 710-718.

2. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1120-1124.

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with a girl who dragged her down till she murdered her.

Helpless lover and sought release in the waters of the

West River. The story ends with a dress trial of the

girl in the court of heaven where she is acquitted and

the court officer declared "the guilty party".....

1. "LAW AND ORDER," pp. 710-716.
2. "THE GUILTY PARTY," pp. 1180-1184.

an untidy man sitting by the window reading.....while his children play in the streets."¹

Boyhood Frolics and Adventures

Some of O. Henry's boyhood frolics and adventures, early artistic inclinations, and respect for his school teacher aunt are represented in his stories.

"THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF"² was influenced by the author's happy boyhood days of adventure when he and his friends would hie to the woods and play Indian with all the fearlessness and savageness of real red men scalping and burning their victims, and again madly dashing on horseback, over many miles to warn the white man in the stockade of the approach of the enemy and the contemplated massacre.

O. Henry early attempted to draw sketches. The account of the drawing in "A SERVICE OF LOVE"³ is an actual fact. It says:

"At six he drew a picture of the town pump with a prominent citizen passing it hastily. The effort was framed and hung in the drug store window by the side of the ear of corn with an uneven number of rows."⁴

Azalia Adair, the heroine of "THE MUNICIPAL REPORT",⁵ is a representation of the author's aunt "Lina" Porter, an obscure, poor, neat, honest, adorable creature; one possessing great literary ability and human insight; and a woman for whom her nephew had great respect.

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1124
2. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 891-897
3. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 20-24
4. " " " " p. 21
5. "STRICTLY BUSINESS", pp. 1208-1217

an artist was sitting by the window reading.... while
his children play in the streets."

Boyhood Trollop and Adventures

Some of O. Henry's boyhood trollop and adventures, early artistic inclinations, and respect for his school teacher are represented in his stories. "THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF" was influenced by the author's happy boyhood days of adventure when he and his friends would ride to the woods and play Indian with all the fearlessness and savagery of real red men scalping and burning their victims, and again wildly dashing on horseback, over many miles to warn the white men in the schools of the approach of the enemy and the contemplated massacre. O. Henry early attempted to draw sketches. The account of the drawing in "A SERVICE OF TOWNS" is an actual fact. It says:

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1. "THE THIRTEEN LIPS", p. 1134
2. "THE THIRTEEN", pp. 891-897
3. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 80-84
4. " " " " p. 81
5. "THE THIRTEEN LIPS", pp. 1202-1217

Drug Store Experiences

The experiences O. Henry received in Clarke Porter's drug store were many and varied. In "THE LOVE-PHILTRE OF IKEY SCHOENSTEIN"¹ may be found a description of his uncle's store and a skilful portrayal of the author as a druggist and as a student of human nature there. This drug store scorned the labor saving arts of a modern pharmacy and mixed its own ingredients and rolled its own pills. The store was located on the corner where ragged and hilarious children played and became candidates for the cough drops and soothing syrups waiting for them inside. Ikey, representing O. Henry, was a friend to his customers; he was a counselor, confessor, and advisor, an able and willing mentor whose learning was respected and whose wisdom was venerated. Chunk McGowan's request for a love potion for his sweetheart, that she might love him better was promptly compounded by Ikey who was also in love with the same girl, and who had mixed a dose of morphine that would cause her to sleep soundly until long after the hour set for the elopement. During the evening meal, McGowan changed his mind about the pill and dropped it into the cup of Rose's father, who, instead of watching to prevent the elopement of which he had been warned, fell into a sound sleep, permitting an easy escape for the couple.

"JEFF PETERS AS A PERSONAL MAGNET"² is a satire on quack druggists and doctors with whom he was, no doubt,

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 40-42.

2. "THE GENTLE GRAFTER", pp. 213-216

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set for the elopement. During the evening meal, McGowan
changed his mind about the pill and dropped it into the
cup of Rose's father, who, instead of watching to prevent
the elopement of which he had been warned, fell into a
sound sleep, permitting an easy escape for the couple.
"THE RETURN AS A PERSONAL MARRIAGE" is a satire
on cheap druggists and doctors with whom he was, no doubt,

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 40-42.
2. "THE GENTLE GENTLE", pp. 213-216.

familiar. Such pretenders to medical skill as Jeff Peters whose "Resurrection Bitters" compounded in the proportion of two dollars' worth of fluid extract of cinchona and a dime's worth of aniline, the quantity of which had been increased from the water tap until a half gross of eight-ounce bottles had been filled, and who sold this mixture as genuine medicine to thousands of people in hundreds of villages and small towns, were well known half a century ago.

Looking at many things from the point of view of a druggist is quite natural with the author. In "THE SNOW MAN"¹ he says,

"In the throat of the thirsty the snow is a vitriol. In appearance as plausible as the breakfast food of the angels, it is as hot in the mouth as ginger.....It is a derivative from water, air, and some cold, uncanny fire from which the caloric has been extracted....."

"Still to the saddest overcoated optimist it is a plague.....It beneficently covers the wheat fields swelling the crop - and the Flour Trust gets us by the throat like a sudden quinsy."

.....
The snow is a "Chemical Test. It is a good man who can show a reaction that is not chiefly composed of a drachm or two of potash and magnesia with traces of Adam, Ananias, Nebuchadnezzar, and the fretful porcupine."²

In "A MATTER OF MEAN ELEVATION"³ O. Henry approaches the modern psycho-chemical analysis of humanity when he asks,

1. "WAIFS & STRAYS", pp. 1307-1317
2. " " " " p. 1310
3. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 877-883

"Why are we made serious and solemn and sublime by mountain heights, grave and contemplative by an abundance of overhanging trees, reduced to inconstancy and monkey capers by the ripples on a sandy beach? Did the protoplasm - but enough. The chemists are looking into the matter, and before long they will have all life in the table of the symbols."¹

"THE LOST BLEND"² pictures two young men having the precision and spirit of indefatigable chemists experimenting for months trying to find the one ingredient that will produce the sparkling, exhilarating liquor they had once contrived. By the casual remark of a friend, they discovered that water was the ingredient that was lacking to produce the proper effect and result.

"NEXT TO READING MATTER"³ is another story of a quack doctor who told a long love story as a means of getting his subject interested in buying a fifty cent box of pills for coughs, colds,

"or hoarseness or any bronchial affection... You see the formula printed on the box. Each tablet contains licorice, 2 grains; balsam tolu, 1/10 grain; oil of anise, 1/20 minim; oil of tar, 1/60 minim; oleo-resin of cubebs, 1/60 minim; fluid extract of 'chuchula', 1/10 minim."⁴

This mixture was sold under the name of "Tate's Compound Magic Chuchula Bronchial Lozenges."

On The Ranch In Texas

O. Henry's two-year visit on the Hall Ranch in Texas furnished him a great wealth of story material. In

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 880-881.
2. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1114-1117.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 305-313.
4. " " " " p. 313.

his many stories representing this period of his life we find descriptions of chaparrel and mesquite, of the strong, sturdy ranger with a heart of stone for a desperado, but one full of tenderness and sympathy for the needy. The ranger never retreats in face of danger; he will rather die at his post. The spirit and adventure of the wide open spaces of the frontier State were caught by O. Henry and transferred to his stories of this section.

"THE CABALLERO'S WAY"¹ gives us a description of Lee Hall, the fearless ranger whom O. Henry admired, and gives an account of his daring attempt to rid the State of one of its desperate murderers. Mr. Hall in the person of Lieutenant Sandbridge is described as "Six feet two, blond as a Viking, quiet as a deacon, dangerous as a machine gun"² and also "thou great, red mountain of a man! And thou are kind and good, as well as strong."³ Lieutenant Sandbridge had received orders to hunt down and capture the Cisco Kid, the bold Spanish border man, who had killed eighteen men by more or less foul means. The Cisco Kid roamed anywhere between the Frio and Rio Grande Rivers and every one feared him. Near Lone Wolf Crossing his girl, Tonia, lived. The Kid might drop in here any time. Sandbridge called often hoping for a meeting with his enemy. One day as Sandbridge and Tonia were making plans for communication when the Kid intended to leave when he made his next visit, the Kid was hiding in the pear and

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 157-163.

2. " " " " p. 157.

3. " " " " p. 160.

overheard. That night he secretly sent a letter signed "Tonia" to Sandbridge saying that they would wear each other's clothes and would leave an hour before daybreak the next day. Sandbridge was there and with three shots brought his object down, but it was Tonia, and the Kid dashed away into the distance.

Lee Hall is the hero of another story "HYGEIA AT THE SOLITO"¹ which shows the big heart this large brawny man possessed. Raidler is the personification of Lee Hall.

"A week before, while riding the prairies, Raidler had come upon a sick and weakling calf deserted and bawling. Without dismounting he had reached and slung the distressed bossy across his saddle, and dropped it at the ranch for the boys to attend to.....A creature was ill and helpless; he had the power to render aid - these were the only postulates for the cattleman to act. They form his system of logic and the most of his creed. McGuire was the seventh invalid whom Raidler had picked up"²

as a consumptive and given special care at his ranch. The crabbed young chap after months of careful treatment and rest did not appear to improve. An eminent physician passing by, was asked to examine McGuire, and reported that he was in perfect health and advised that he be put to strenuous work immediately. Early the next morning he was ordered to dress and join the branding party that was going out on the prairie. On the way he had a hemorrhage but

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 121-129

2. " " " " " p. 123

rode on. Later in a fight he beat one of the men soundly, then ran to a bush, stretched himself on the ground where he bled for several hours. No one could get him to get up off the ground. He clung to it for two weeks. At the end of two months when Raidler came to inspect the work and the range, McGuire greeted and thanked his benefactor for ordering him out of the house; told him he had found health close to the ground; explained that the doctor had not examined himself but Ylario, his servant; confessed that the cattlemen were the whitest sports he had ever traveled with; and asked to be permitted to stay with them.

McGuire's impression of Raidler's ranch house resembles to a certain extent O. Henry's description of the new Hall ranch house which he described in a letter to the boys' mother saying it looked like a barn although it was the best in that part of the country.

The kind hearts of the desperadoes of the Southwest is exemplified in "THE CHAPARREL PRINCE"¹ in which a band of robbers held up and ransacked the mail coach demanding that the carrier translate the German letter of an overworked, lonely, and homesick child to her mother, after which they bound the carrier to a tree and tied the horses. Just before daylight they returned and untied the man who proceeded on his journey. Arriving late at the child's home, he greeted the family

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 194-200

rode on. Later in a fight he beat one of the men soundly, then ran to a bush, stretched himself on the ground where he bled for several hours. No one could get him to get up off the ground. He clung to it for

two weeks. At the end of two months when his father came to inspect the work and the range, McBride greeted and thanked his benefactor for ordering him out of the house; told him he had found health close to the ground; explained that the doctor had not examined himself but that his servant; confessed that the cattlemen were the whitest sports he had ever traveled with; and asked to be permitted to stay with them.

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The kind heart of the desperadoes of the Southwest is exemplified in "THE CHASSED PRINCE" in which a band of robbers held up and ransomed the mail coach demanding that the carrier translate the German letter of an overworked, lonely and homeless child to her mother, after which they bound the carrier to a tree and tied the horses. Just before daylight they returned and untied the man who proceeded on his journey. Arriving late at the child's home, he greeted the family

who came trooping out to inquire for mail, and told them his experience of that night. No sooner had he concluded his tale than the child herself crawled out from beneath a pile of blankets in the back of the wagon. Realizing the cruelty of the master, the robbers had raided the house, secured the child, and had used this means of getting her home. Lena who had been reading Grimm's Fairy Tales believed that a prince would come and save her from her wretched master's house. When asked how she came from the house to the wagon, she replied, "The Prince brought me."

Homes in the Texas ranges are miles apart and far from any town. When a ranchman starts out over the chaparrel he has to keep alert to stay in the right way, otherwise he may come back to the starting point.

"ROUND THE CIRCLE"¹ is the story of a man who was going to ride to another ranch to buy some stock. Two miles from home he became lost in the chaparrel and wandered about the rest of the day worrying over the welfare of his wife that night, when just before sundown he drove up before his own door.

Feuds are common in every state in the South; however, there are certain rules which are understood and one of these is that no feudist can be shot when in the company of a woman. "A TECHNICAL ERROR"² relates

1. "WAIIFS AND STRAYS", pp. 1276-1279.

2. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 900-904.

who came knocking out to inquire for him, and told
 then his experience of that night. He soon had
 concluded his tale than the child herself crawled out
 from beneath a pile of blankets in the back of the
 wagon. Realizing the cruelty of the master, the
 robbers had raided the house, secured the child, and
 had used this means of getting her home. Jane who had
 been reading Grimm's Fairy Tales believed that a prince
 would come and save her from her wretched master's power.
 When asked how she came from the house to the wagon, she
 replied, "The Prince brought me."

Homes in the Texas ranges are miles apart and
 far from any town. When a ranchman starts out over the
 chaparral he has to keep alert to stay in the right way.
 otherwise he may come back to the starting point.
 Around the circle is the story of a man who was going
 to ride to another ranch to buy some stock. The miles
 from home he became lost in the chaparral and wandered
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 and one of these is that no feudist can be shot when
 in the company of a woman. "A TECHNICAL ERROR" relates

1. "WIVES AND STRAYS", pp. 1275-1279.
 2. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 900-904.

an incident that occurred in a feud between the family of Sam Durkee and Ben Tatum. Both of these young men were in love with the same girl, Ella Baynes. Tatum came across the creek to get her and they both rode away to be married. Durkee and his friend followed until they came to a roadhouse which they entered for refreshment, only to find Tatum and Ella Baynes there, too. The unwritten law forbade any violence. Suddenly the couple vanished. The next time they were seen, they were again in a restaurant eating. Durkee looked at them keenly. "There's a code," I heard him say, either to me or to himself, 'that won't let you shoot a man in the company of a woman, but, by thunder, there ain't one to keep you from killing a woman in the company of a man.'¹ In a flash Durkee fired six bullets into the body of Tatum, who, dressed in his partner's clothes, fell to the floor. This masquerade had given Durkee the opportunity of technically laying aside "the obligations of the code".

"THE RED ROSES OF TONIA"² suggests an incident which O. Henry may have heard or taken part in himself, for he was fond of impromptu adventure such as we find in this story and the humor of the last few paragraphs is representative of his attitude toward an accident or misfortune. Tonia's new Easter hat was on the train delayed beyond the burning trestle. Distressed because she would not have a new hat to wear next day like her

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", p. 904.

2. "WAIFS AND STRAYS", pp. 1271-1276.

an incident that occurred in a tent between the family of Sam Burke and Sam Taylor. Both of these young men were in love with the same girl, Miss Taylor. When came across the creek to get her and they both went to be married. Burke and his friend followed until they came to a roadhouse which they entered for refreshment, only to find Taylor and Miss Taylor there, too. The unwritten law forbade any violence. Suddenly the couple vanished. The next time they were seen, they were again in a restaurant eating. Burke looked at them keenly. "There's a code," I heard him say, "either to me or to himself. That man's let you shoot a man in the company of a woman, but, by thunder, there ain't one to keep you from killing a woman in the company of a man." In a flash Burke fired six bullets into the body of Taylor, who, dressed in his partner's clothes, fell to the floor. This newspaper had given Burke the opportunity of technically laying aside "the obligation of the code."

"THE NEW CODE OF TOWNS" suggests an incident which O. Henry may have heard or taken part in himself, for he was fond of imaginary adventure such as we find in this story and the humor of the last few paragraphs is representative of his attitude toward an accident or misfortune. Town's new partner had been on the train delayed beyond the burning whistle. Blatantly because she would not have a man hat to wear next day like her

friends, she explained her trouble to Burrows and Pearson who were calling on her, adding there was a store at Lone Elm about thirty miles away, but that was too far to think of going at that hour of the evening. A short time later the two friends bade her good night. Out in the yard they sprang on their horses and rode together to Lone Elm which they reached at midnight and bought the last two hats in the store. The hats were alike, large white ones trimmed with white roses. Tonia had especially requested red ones; but they had had no choice. Each took a hat and rode home together. A few miles from her home Burrows turned around and fired his Winchester. Pearson and his horse fell to the ground crushing the hat. Burrows rode on and delivered his hat which Tonia did not like and refused to wear when her friends called that morning. While they were deliberating on the subject, Pearson rode up and presented her with his package. Tonia was delighted with both the shape of the hat and the red roses.

"'Thank you, thank you,.....' she said happily. 'It's just what I wanted. Won't you come over to Cactus tomorrow and go to church with me?'

"'If I can,' said Pearson.....

"'What have you been doing, Pearson?' asked Daddy Weaver. 'You ain't looking so well as common.'

"'Me?' said Pearson. 'I've been painting flowers. Them roses was white when I left Lone Elm. Help me down, Daddy Weaver, for I haven't got any more paint to spare.'"¹

friends, she explained her trouble to Burrows and Pearson who were calling on her, adding there was a store at Lone Elm about thirty miles away, but that was too far to think of going at that hour of the evening. A short time later the two friends rode her good night. One in the yard they swung on their horses and rode together to Lone Elm which they reached at midnight and bought the last two hats in the store. The hats were alike, large white ones trimmed with white roses. Tomita had especially requested red ones, but they had no choice. Each took a hat and rode home together. A few miles from her home Burrows turned around and fired his Winchester. Pearson and his horse fell to the ground crushing the hat. Burrows rode on and delivered his hat which Tomita did not like and refused to wear when her friends called that morning. While they were deliberating on the subject, Pearson rode up and presented her with his package. Tomita was delighted with both the shape of the hat and the red roses.

"Thank you, thank you,....." she said happily. "It's just what I wanted. Won't you come over to Cecilia tomorrow and go to church with me?" "If I can," said Pearson. "What have you been doing, Pearson?" asked Daddy Weaver. "You ain't looking no well as common." "No?" said Pearson. "I've been painting flowers. These roses was white when I left Lone Elm. Help me down, Daddy Weaver, for I haven't got any more paint to spare."

"THE MISSING CHORD"¹ seems to have been suggested by O. Henry's friendship with Clarence Crosier, niece of the postmaster, Mr. Ewell, who lived fifteen or twenty-five miles from the Hall ranch. A few scattered quotations from this story give evidence to actual facts. "I was guilty in the second degree of hanging around old Cal's ranch all the time that I could spare away from lambing and shearing."² Miss Marilla was the girl's name. "I used to ride over to Double Elm anywhere from nine to sixteen times a week.....just as a frivolous excuse to see Marilla,"³ and "I stayed to supper."⁴ Clarence may have told how her father bought her a piano which suggested this story of the old rancher who thought he had bought an excellent piano for his daughter, but which was merely a machine to play the piano with.

While in LaSalle County, Texas, O. Henry studied the ranch business thinking that some day he might become manager or proprietor of a ranch, but several dry and profitless years caused him to change his mind. In "MADAM BO-PEEP OF THE RANCHES"⁵ Teddy Westlake (as O. Henry) says, "I jogged around on ponies and studied the business in detail, until I got all the points in my head. I saw where it was losing and what the remedies were."⁶ When

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 172-177.
2. " " " " p. 173.
3. " " " " pp. 173-174.
4. " " " " p. 174.
5. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 962-973.
6. " " " p. 967.

asked why he was there on the ranch, Teddy replied,

"To tell the truth.....it wasn't for the salary. That about kept me in cigars and sunburn lotions. I was sent South by my doctor. 'Twas that right lung that was going to the bad.....I needed climate and ozone and rest and things of that sort."
 ".....It's well now, isn't it, Teddy?"
 "Sound as a mesquite chunk," he replied.¹

As A Cartoonist

The three stories selected to represent the author's interest in drawing and painting seem to indicate O. Henry's judgments concerning his own art as a cartoonist. The first story "A SERVICE OF LOVE"² suggests that he believed he would be unsuccessful in that profession alone. The story is that of a young couple, Joe Larrabee, a genius for pictorial art, and his wife, Delia, a pianist, who worked tirelessly at their art; but art "flagged" and both were compelled to find other work to provide funds for their maintenance.

The second story "ART AND THE BRONCHO"³ suggests the fact that O. Henry thought his talent lay in another field. This story tells of a Texan's attempt to paint a typical Western scene of the chaparral plains with a wild-eyed, stampeding steer in the foreground and a cowboy on horseback in the background. Prior to the meeting of the assembly, this picture was placed in the state capitol with hopes that the legislature would buy it to adorn one of the walls of the state house. While

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", p. 972.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 20-24.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 313-320.

asked why he was there on the ranch, Teddy replied,

"To tell the truth.....it wasn't for the salary. That about kept me in clover and my own notions. I was sent down by my doctor. 'Turn that right lung that was going to the bad.....I needed climate and some rest and change of that sort.'It's well now, isn't it, Teddy?" "Sound as a medicine chest," he replied.

As a Cartoonist

The three stories selected to represent the

author's interest in drawing and painting seem to

indicate G. Henry's judgment concerning his own art as

a cartoonist. The first story "A SERVICE OF LOVE"

suggests that he believed he would be unsuccessful in

that profession alone. The story is that of a young

couple, Joe Larnabee, a genius for pictorial art, and

his wife, Della, a pianist, who worked tirelessly at

their art; but art "flagged" and both were compelled to

find other work to provide funds for their maintenance.

The second story "ART AND THE BROWNS"

suggests the fact that G. Henry thought his talent lay

in another field. This story tells of a Texan's attempt

to paint a typical Western scene of the chapter again

with a wild-eyed, stampeding steer in the foreground and

a cowboy on horseback in the background. Prior to the

meeting of the assembly, this picture was placed in the

state capital with hopes that the legislature would buy

it to adorn one of the walls of the state house. While

1. "WHIRLWIND", p. 272.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 20-24.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 213-220.

the House was taking action on this matter, an art critic and painter, an authority from the East, was asked to express his opinion of the painting.

"'For art's sake, son,' he said.....
'don't spend any more money for paint. It
isn't a picture at all.....don't get in
front of any more canvas.....No more
pictures.'"¹

Leaping on his horse, Lonny, followed by all of his companions rode straight into the capitol where the horse, seeing the steer, dashed with his rider through the picture. Resigning his art ambitions, Lonny with his companions started back to the ranch.

"A MADISON SQUARE ARABIAN NIGHT" ² is the story of an artist who had the same faculty as O. Henry in bringing out in the picture some hidden or enduring quality that ordinarily people did not notice. Explaining his case the artist said, "I had a knack of bringing out in the face of a portrait the hidden character of the original. I don't know how I did it - I painted what I saw."³ The artist's host produced a picture he had received in the mail that morning and asked him to make a pastel sketch of it. In an hour the picture was completed. When the artist had gone, another artist who lived in the same building was called to give his estimate of the sketch.

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 319.
2. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1069-1073.
3. " " " p. 1072.

"As a drawing,' said the artist, 'I can't praise it enough. It's the work of a master - bold and fine and true.....I haven't seen any pastel work near as good in years.'

"The face, man.....what would you say of that?"

"The face," said Reineman, "is the face of one of God's own angels."

"Take that sketch, boy, and paint the picture of your life from it and leave the price to me," said the host.¹

As A Reporter

"CONFESSIONS OF A HUMORIST"² portrays

0. Henry's experiences as a reporter on a paper, possibly "The Houston Post" to which he contributed a daily column on the editorial page. This story explains that his humorous remarks and anecdotes were spontaneous at first, but that constant demand drained him of ideas. He sought suggestions everywhere, from his wife and children, from friends, from any one. He says,

"I stood among them like a veritable killjoy. Let a bright saying, a witty comparison, a piquant phrase fall from their lips and I was after it like a hound springing upon a bone,.....and turning aside guiltily and meanly, I would make a note of it.....upon my cuff for my own future use.

.....
 "I was a lugubrious fox praising the
 singing of my friends.....that they might
 drop.....the morsels of wit that I coveted...

"No persons, places, times, or subjects were exempt from my plundering in search of material.

.....
 "My own home became a hunting ground.....³

"I began to market those pearls of
unwisdom and humor that should have enriched
only the sacred precincts of home.....

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1073.

2. "WAIFS AND STRAYS", pp. 1289-1294.

3. " " " , p. 1291.

"As a drawing," said the artist, "I can't praise it enough. It's the work of a master - bold and fine and true. . . . I haven't seen any greater work than this in years."

"The face, man. . . . What would you say of that?"

"The face," said Holman, "is the face of one of God's own angels."

"Take that sketch, boy, and paint the picture of your life from it and leave the price to me," said the host.

As A Reporter

"CONTRIBUTIONS OF A HUMORIST" PORTRAITS

Henry's experience as a reporter on a paper, possibly "The Horston Post" to which he contributed a daily column on the editorial page. This story explains that his humorous remarks and anecdotes were spontaneous at first, but that constant demand drained him of ideas. He sought suggestions everywhere, from his wife and children, from friends, from any one. He says,

"I stood among them like a veritable kilroy. Let a bright saying, a witty comparison, a pleasant phrase fall from their lips and I was after it like a hound springing upon a bone. . . . and turning aside quickly and manly, I would make a note of it. . . . upon my cuff for my own future use."

"I was a lugubrious fox preying the single of my friends. . . . that they might drop. . . . the morsels of wit that I coveted. . . . the persons, places, times, or subjects were exact from my plundering in search of material."

"My own home became a hunting ground. . . . I began to market those pearls of wisdom and humor that should have enriched only the sacred precincts of home. . . ."

"A literary Judas, I.....
 ".....Of nights I have bent over
 her (his wife) cruel as a wolf above a
 tender lamb hearkening even to her soft
 words murmured in sleep, hoping to catch
 an idea for my next day's grind."¹

Family fun and secrets became food for the public press. His efforts became strained and unnatural and his work on the paper ceased.

Elopement

0. Henry's elopement with a girl whose parents did not favor him seems to be another event in the author's life that suggested the story of "THE LOVE-PHILTRE OF IKEY SCHOENSTEIN"² who ran off with his girl one night while her father slept soundly.

"THE DISCOUNTERS OF MONEY"³ reveals another story of two young folks from Virginia who had eloped and gone to New York. A kind gentleman found them without money in Madison Square, found shelter for the girl with his own sweetheart that night, but left the young man sitting on a bench in the park because his Southern pride forbade his accepting any assistance.

As A Banker

0. Henry's year of experience as teller in the "First National Bank" of Austin provided him with ample background and understanding of the atmosphere of banking institutions in a small community. That there are tricks in the banking business as well as in any other,

1. "WAIFS AND STRAYS", p. 1292.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 40-42.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", " 297-301.

"A literary judge, I.....
 ".....Of nights I have bent over
 her (his wife) as a wolf above a
 tender lamb breathing even to her soft
 words murmured in sleep, hoping to catch
 an idea for my next day's grind."

Finally Tom and Cecelia became food for the
 public press. His efforts became strained and unavailing
 and his work on the paper ceased.

Eligement

G. Henry's eligement with a girl whose parents
 did not favor him seems to be another event in the author's
 life that suggested the story of "THE LOVE-LETTERS OF MARY
 SCHONSTADT" who ran off with his girl one night while
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"THE DISCOVERY OF MONEY" reveals another story
 of two young folks from Virginia who had eloped and come
 to New York. A kind gentleman found them without money
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 sweetheart that night, but left the young man sleeping on
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As a Banker

G. Henry's year of experience as teller in the
 "First National Bank" of Austin provided him with ample
 background and understanding of the atmosphere of bank-
 ing institutions in a small community. That there are
 tricks in the banking business as well as in any other,

1. "WIFE AND SISTER", p. 1292.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 40-42.
3. "TRICKS OF DESTINY", " 297-301.

our author knew well; but bank examiners are not easily tricked. Nevertheless, one must be very clever to outdo a Western banker as "FRIENDS IN SAN ROSARIO"¹ will show. "The First National Bank" and the "Stockmen's National Bank" stood on opposite corners of a street in San Rosario. Before nine o'clock one Saturday morning, a new examiner arrived at the First National and immediately set to work. His fingers flew over the gold, silver, notes, reports, and bookkeepers' accounts. Everything tallied. He worked rapidly intending to examine both banks and take the eleven forty-five train out of the town for the week-end. In the meantime the cashier sent the messenger boy across the street to notify the other bank that the examiner had arrived. The boy returned with a note for the president. When the examiner had finished everything else, he asked for the loans, which were presented to him. He looked them over and discovered that there were loans to the amount of \$40,000 without any security. The president took the examiner to his private office to explain and took a seat from which he could see the other bank. Then he told the examiner that he had taken the securities to save a friend in trouble and then related a detailed account of an incident in his life to which the examiner listened but inattentively trying to figure out what relation it had to the present situation. The eleven forty-five train came in and departed. Soon the president noticed that the front blind

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 352-359.

our author knew well; but bank examiners are not easily
 tricked. Nevertheless, one must be very clever to
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 life to which the examiner listened but inattentively
 trying to figure out what relation it had to the present
 situation. The eleven forty-five train came in and
 departed. Soon the president noticed that the front blind

in the Stockmen's Bank was drawn down. He reached in his pocket and pulled out a leather folder containing the securities for the notes in question. The examiner quickly completed his business there and crossed the street to the other bank.

The bank presidents were old friends. The Stockmen's Bank was \$18,000 short of change after accommodating two loyal patrons and had to send for funds which would come on the eleven forty-five train. When the money was in the bank, the front blind would be lowered. The president of the First National had been asked to hold the examiner until the signal was given, which he had done, considering that this paid some on account for a kindness the other president had done for him twenty years before.

Bank examiners seem to have made a deep impression on O. Henry. "A CALL LOAN"¹ is the story of another bank examiner who found a \$10,000 call loan made to a customer of the First National Bank of Chaparosa. That amount was entirely too large for any one person, and although a man's word is good, only cash would satisfy the examiner who gave the president until noon the next day to make the loan good; after that the Department of Justice would have to take action upon the case. It was a serious matter. The bank president stood on the verge of a catastrophe. The president called on his friend, Tom Merwin, the owner of the loan and explained the situation.

1. "HEART OF THE WEST", pp. 177-180.

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in his pocket and pulled out a leather folder containing
the securities for the notes in question. The examiner
quickly completed his business there and crossed the
street to the other bank.

The bank presidents were old friends. The

Stockman's Bank was \$15,000 short of change after
accommodating two loyal patrons and had to send for funds
which would come on the eleven forty-five train. When
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Bank examiners seem to have made a deep

impression on G. Henry. "A CALL LOAN" is the story of
another bank examiner who found a \$10,000 call loan made
to a customer of the First National Bank of Chicago.
That amount was entirely too large for any one person,
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matter. The bank president stood on the verge of a

catastrophe. The president called on his friend, Tom
Marvin, the owner of the loan and explained the situation.

Tom, failing to get assistance from the other bank in town, pondered what course he should take. A call loan was a call loan, and his had been called. He expected large returns from cattle he was selling in Kansas City, but his agent had not come back. At nine o'clock Tom pulled his cap low on his face, put two six-shooters in his belt, and prepared to hold up the nine thirty train when it stopped for water. As he was ready to leap toward the engineer, the bank president caught him and pulling him back said, "The case never needed to be fixed up this way, Tom." When they arrived at Tom's home a few minutes later, they found the agent lying on the couch smoking, and a satchel containing \$29,000 stood in the middle of the floor. The call loan was secure.

Central American Experiences

Several passages in "THE WORLD AND THE DOOR"¹ suggest O. Henry's sudden departure for Central America, his choice of the town where he would disembark and live, his formation of friendships and acquaintances here, and his feeling of peace and security in this ideal spot of the world.

"You've got to skip.....You've got to make tracks, that's all there is to it..... At eleven o'clock the next morning Merriam, with a new suit case full of new clothes and hair-brushes stepped quietly on board a little 500-ton fruit steamer.....The vessel had brought the season's first cargo of limes from Port Limon, and was homeward bound. Merriam

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 853-860.

Tom, failing to get assistance from the other bank in town, pondered what course he should take. A call loan was a call loan, and his had been called. He expected large returns from cattle he was selling in Kansas City, but his agent had not come back. At nine o'clock Tom pulled his cap low on his face, put two six-shooters in his belt, and prepared to hold up the nine thirty train when it stopped for water. As he was ready to leap toward the engineer, the bank president caught him and pulling him back said, "The case never needed to be fixed up this way, Tom." When they arrived at Tom's home a few minutes later, they found the agent lying on the couch smoking, and a suitcase containing \$25,000 stood in the middle of the floor. The call loan was secure.

Central American Experiences

Several passages in "THE WORLD AND THE DOOR" suggest G. Henry's sudden departure for Central America, his choice of the town where he would disembark and live, his formation of friendships and acquaintances here, and his feeling of peace and security in this ideal spot of the world.

"You've got to skip.....You've got to make tracks, that's all there is to it..... At eleven o'clock the next morning Marston, with a new suit case full of new clothes and hair-brushes stepped quietly on board a little 500-ton freight steamer.....The vessel had brought the season's first cargo of lime from Port Limon, and was homeward bound. Marston

had his bank balance of \$2,800 in his pocket in large bills," and desired "to pile up as much water as he could between himself and " his homeland. "There was no time for anything more."

"It was at LaPaz that Merriam decided to land - LaPaz, the Beautiful, a little harborless town smothered in a living green ribbon that banded the foot of a cloud-piercing mountain."¹

Merriam went ashore with his suit case and remained.

Kalb, the vice-consul, attached himself to Merriam, introduced him to the English-speaking inhabitants of the town, borrowed ten dollars, and went back to his hammock. Merriam took a room in "a little wooden hotel in the edge of a banana grove facing the sea, that catered to the tastes of foreigners that had dropped out of the world." Here he met a German doctor, French and Italian merchants, and three or four Americans known as gold men, rubber men, and mahogany men.

"After dinner Merriam sat in a corner of the broad front galeria.....The moonlit sea, spreading infinitely before him seemed to separate him beyond all apprehension from his old life. The horrid tragedy in which he had played such a disastrous part now began, for the first time since he stole on board the fruiter, a wretched fugitive, to lose its sharper outlines. Distance lent assuagement to his view."²

To him this was "an Arcady of waving palms, a lullaby of waves on the shore of a haven of rest, respite, peace, a lotus land of dreamy ease and security - a life of poetry and heart's ease and refuge."³

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", p. 854.

2. " " " "

3. " " " 859.

had his bank balance of \$2,500. In his pocket in large bills, and decided "to pile up as much water as he could between himself and his homeland." "There was no time for anything more."

"It was at Japan that Morrison decided to land - Japan, the beautiful, a little harbor town sheltered in a living green ribbon that banded the foot of a cloud-piercing mountain."

Morrison went ashore with his suit case and remained.

Kalib, the vice-consul, attached himself to

Morrison, introduced him to the English-speaking

inhabitants of the town, borrowed ten dollars, and went

back to his inn. Morrison took a room in a little

wooden hotel in the edge of a banana grove facing the

sea, that catered to the tastes of foreigners that had

dropped out of the world. Here he got a German doctor,

French and Italian merchants, and three or four Americans

known as gold men, rubber men, and mahogany men.

"After dinner Morrison sat in a corner of the broad front gallery.... The moonlight came, spreading indistinctly before him seemed to separate him beyond all apprehension from his old life. The horizon steadily in which he had played such a disastrous part now began, for the first time since he stole on board the freighter, a wretched fugitive, to lose its sharper outlines. Distance lent a new management to his view."

To him this was "an Atrachy of waving palms, a liability of

waves on the shore of a haven of rest, respite, peace, a

loose land of dreamy ease and security - a life of poetry

and heart's ease and refuge."

1. "MORRISON", p. 254.

2. " " " " "

3. " " " " "

"THE FOURTH IN SALVADOR"¹ is O. Henry's account of a Fourth of July celebration which he and his American friends in Trojillo had. He says

"we issue a declaration of interference in which we guarantee that the fourth day of July shall be celebrated in Salvador with all kinds of salutes, explosions, honors of war, oratory, and liquids known to tradition."²

"About eleven o'clock.....we stopped on a street corner and fired a dozen or so rounds, and began a serial assortment of United States whoops and yells, probably the first ever heard in that town.

"When we made that noise things began to liven up. We heard a pattering up a side street, and here came General...Dingo on a white horse with a couple of hundred brown boys.....dragging guns ten feet long." ³

Gun shots were heard several squares away, and away they went. General Dingo "'is a real tropical bird,' says Jones. 'He's turned out the infantry to do honor to the Fourth.'" "We certainly had things stirred up in Salvador." Bullets were flying in all directions.

"Assistance!.....Assistance! In the name of Liberty!" called General Dingo.

"Come on, boys, it's our Fourth, - do we let that little squad of A.D.T.'s break it up?" called Jones.....

"We gathered our guns and assaulted the blue troops in force. We fired over their heads, and then charged 'em with a yell and they broke and ran.....Some of 'em we caught and kicked hard. The General rallied his troops and joined the chase. Finally they scattered in a thick banana grove, and we couldn't flush a single one."⁴

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 360-366.
2. " " " p. 361.
3. " " " p. 364.
4. " " " p. 365.

THE FOURTH IN SALVADOR

account of a Fourth of July celebration which he and his American friends in Trojillo had. He says

"We issued a declaration of independence in which we guaranteed that the Fourth day of July shall be celebrated in Salvador with all kinds of games, explosions, honors of war, cavalry, and lighted known to tradition."

"About eleven o'clock.....we stopped on a street corner and fired a dozen or so rounds, and began a serial assault of United States whips and yells, probably the first ever heard in that town. When we made that noise things began to fly up. We heard a rattling up a side street, and here came General Jones on a white horse with a couple of hundred brown boys.....drizzling guns ten feet long."

Gun shots were heard several squares away, and away they went. General Dingo "is a real tropical bird," says Jones. He's turned out the infantry to do honor to the Fourth. "We certainly had things stirred up in Salvador. Bullets were flying in all directions.

"Assistance!.....Assistance! in the name of liberty!" called General Dingo. "Come on, boys, it's our Fourth. So we let that little squad of A.D.T.'s break it up!" called Jones..... "We gathered our guns and assaulted the blue troops in force. We fired over their heads, and then charged 'em with a yell and they broke and ran.....Some of 'em we caught and kicked hard. The General rallied his troops and joined the chase. Finally they scattered in a thick banana grove and we couldn't flush a single one."

1.	"ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 360-363.
2.	" " " " " " " "
3.	" " " " " " " "
4.	" " " " " " " "

The next day this message was received from the general:

"General Dingo has informed me, Señor Casparis, of your gallant service in our cause. I desire to thank you with my person. The bravery of you and the other señores Americanos turned the struggle for liberty in our favor. Our party triumphed. The terrible battle will live forever in history."

"'Battle,' says I; 'what battle?'".....

"'Señor Casparis is very modest,' says General Dingo. 'He led his brave compadres into the thickest of the fearful conflict. Yes. Without their aid the revolution would have failed.'"

Very innocently they had helped the natives to secure their liberty.

Trojillo had many different kinds of inhabitants within its bounds. Some went there to defraud the native inhabitants; others contriving to do so discovered their consciences to be more sensitive than they had previously realized. In "MASTERS OF ARTS"¹, O. Henry tells us how President Losado of the republic, an amazingly vain man, became the victim of two young artists - Keogh, a photographer, and White, a painter with an ideal whom Keogh had persuaded to leave his modest shop in New York for a five thousand dollar proposition in Honduras. Two weeks after White's arrival the president arranged to have his picture painted for ten thousand dollars. White was a genuine artist with an ideal for his art. He did not intend to debase it, but the picture the president

1. "CABBAGES AND KINGS", pp. 503-510.

The next day this message was received from

the general:

"General Blanco has informed me, before
Cassario, of your gallant service in our
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The terrible battle will live forever in
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"Battle," says I; "what battle?"
"The battle of the night," says
General Blanco. "He led his brave comrades
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Trojillo had many different kinds of inhabitants

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President Lincoln of the republic, an amazingly vain man,

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Keogh had persuaded to leave his modest shop in New York

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weeks after White's arrival the president arranged to

have his picture painted for ten thousand dollars. White

was a genuine artist with an ideal for his art. He did

not intend to depict it, but the picture the president

had sketched was a monstrosity. He felt like giving up, but Keogh held him to his task. In a month the picture was completed and he called the president to come and see it. The president was delighted with the picture which he planned to have hung in the National Gallery of Statesmen and Heroes and paid White ten thousand dollars. White tore the check into a thousand pieces and seizing a bucket of paint dashed it all over the picture. Keogh was angered to white heat when he heard of this climax.

Rumors were made that the president was making secret concessions with the English, but he publicly denied the accusation. A few days later Keogh went up on the hill to get a view of the village. Finding a hole in the wall around the president's garden he looked in, and seeing the president and the Englishman sitting at a table snapped their pictures just as they shook hands across the table, apparently to confirm an agreement. This was Keogh's chance to make a fortune. When he showed the picture he was asked his price, and twenty one-thousand-dollar United States Treasury notes were placed in his hands. White wanted to see one.

"'Carry,' he said,.....'you think a heap of your art, don't you?!....."

"'I thought you were a fool the other day.....But if you was, so am I. I've been in some funny deals.....but I've always managed to scramble fair.....But.....when you've got the other fellow cinched, and the screws on him, and he's got to put up - why, it don't strike me as being a man's game..... I tore that photograph up and laid the pieces on that stack of money and shoved the whole business back across the table.'"¹

had sketched was a monument. He felt like giving up, but Keogh held him to his task. In a month the picture was completed and he called the president to come and see it. The president was delighted with the picture which he planned to have hung in the National Gallery of Statues and Heroes and paid White ten thousand dollars. White tore the check into a thousand pieces and selling a bucket of paint dashed it all over the picture. Keogh was angered to white heat when he heard of this trick. Rumors were made that the president was making secret concessions with the English, but he publicly denied the accusation. A few days later Keogh went up on the hill to get a view of the village. Finding a hole in the wall around the president's garden he looked in, and seeing the president and the Englishman sitting at a table snapped their pictures just as they shook hands across the table, apparently to confirm an agreement. This was Keogh's chance to make a fortune. When he showed the picture he was asked his price, and twenty one-thousand-dollar United States Treasury notes were placed in his hands. White wanted to see one.

"Barry," he said, "you think a heap of your art, don't you?" "I thought you were a fool the other day.... But if you was, so am I. I've been in some funny deals.... But I've always managed to scramble fair.... But.... when you've got the other fellow cinched, and the screws on him, and he's got to put up - why, it don't strike me as being a man's game.... I tore that photograph up and laid the pieces on that stack of money and showed the whole business back across the table."

While in Honduras, O. Henry gathered many interesting stories of this enchanted land. He learned that many men went there as consul or in some other capacity as a means of escaping from their troubles and love affairs. "THE LOTUS AND THE BOTTLE"¹ relates that Willard Geddie, consul for the United States at Corolio, had secured that position as a method of relief from his passion for Miss Ida Payne of Norfolk. After one year's residence there, he read in his home paper that this young lady with J. Ward Tolliver and a few others were sailing among the Bahamas and along the Central and South American coasts in the "Idalia". Sitting on the veranda he caught sight of the ship as it passed. He was satisfied now with Paula, his native sweetheart. Few could compare with her. After dinner as he walked along the coast he saw a bottle floating on the waves toward him. He picked it up, surmising that it contained a letter from Ida - he could recognize her signet seal and some of the capital letters appeared to be like hers. That she should take this method of communication irritated his pride. He went to see Paula and "made the expected but long deferred speech"², and felt happier than he ever had before in his life. It was dark when he reached home where stretching out his hand for a match, he seized the bottle which he had forgotten. Turning, he walked down the path to the beach where he

1. "CABBAGES AND KINGS", pp. 438-443.

2. " " " " p. 442.

hurled the unopened bottle far out into the sea. Sometime later a small boat with Geddie half dead in it arrived at the pier. The sailors had found him a mile out in the harbor swimming after a bottle.

New Orleans Influence

The interim between the death of his wife and his trial O. Henry spent in the quaint old French and creole city of the South, New Orleans. The beauty and charm of this Old World city with its narrow streets with French names and balconied houses, and cafés he has pictured in "BLIND MAN'S HOLIDAY".¹ The striking love story he has placed in this quaint old French setting with the old Catholic priest taking the young man to the room and also the workshop of his bride, and proving to him her worth and excellence, typifies the true O. Henry searching for the interests of the people of this picturesque city of the South.

Even in the midst of this delightful atmosphere O. Henry could not get away from thoughts concerning his place among society. He puts these thoughts into the character of Lorison who

"From his point of perspective.....saw himself an outcast from society, forever to be a shady skulker along the ragged edge of respectability.....He was self-condemned to this opinion, as he was self-exiled through it, to this quaint Southern city a thousand miles from his former home. Here he had dwelt.....knowing but few, keeping in a subjective world of shadows which was invaded at times by the perplexing bulks of jarring realities."²

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", pp. 951-962.

2. " " p. 951.

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"From his point of perspective . . . saw himself outcast from society, forever to be a shadowy figure along the ragged edge of respectability . . . He was self-sunglazed to this opinion, as he was self-satisfied through it, to this quaint Southern city a thousand miles from his former home. Here he had dwelt . . . knowing but few, keeping in a subjective world of shadows which was invaded at times by the perplexing bulks of living realities."

Later in the story Lorison says, "I am an outcast from honest people; I am wrongly accused of one crime, and am, I believe, guilty of another."¹

New Orleans, the "big, almsgiving, long-suffering city of the South, the cold weather paradise of the tramps"² forms the background for "WHISTLING DICK'S CHRISTMAS STOCKING".³ The levee with its long train of freight cars, the Mississippi River on one side of it and a swamp on the other, the steamers and tugs plying their ways along the stream, bordered with warehouses and wharves piled high with bales and bags filled with the products of plantation and city was the view that first caught the sight of Whistling Dick as he stepped from a box car to make this his winter home. While whistling along the street he was warned by a friendly policeman that he must leave the city. Walking along the open road he was greeted with "Merry Christmas" by a girl in a surrey in which he saw also bags of money, presumably to pay her father's servants with on Christmas morning. Dick joined a group of tramps who planned to rob this gentleman that night. Refusing to join the robbers, he was left in the hut. Writing a warning note, he placed it with a stone inside a silk stocking which the girl had dropped that afternoon and sent all three crashing through the gentleman's window. The tramps were caught, Dick shared the family feast, was given a comfortable room that

1. "WHIRLIGIGS", p. 953.

2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 401.

3. " " " " pp. 401-410.

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the gentleman's window. The tramps were caught, Dick
shared the family feast, was given a comfortable room that

night, and at dawn Christmas morning slipped noiselessly from his room and fled back to the levee where freedom awaited him.

Penitentiary Experiences
- Would Not Prove An Alibi

O. Henry's desire to be silent and take the consequences rather than speak the truth at his trial finds a counterpart in "Kid" Brady in "VANITY AND SOME SABLES."¹ "Kid" was accused of having stolen a set of \$1,000. sables from a wealthy woman for his girl. One afternoon when Dick and his girl were out walking, a detective stopped them and demanded the furs. Just then a policeman stepped up:

"'Once,' he said, 'I sold furs.....
Yes, dese are saples.....Dis scarf is
vort \$12 and diss muff -'
" Biff! came the palm of the Kid's
powerful hand upon the policeman's mouth....²
"'The scarf is vort \$12 and the muff is
vort \$9,' persisted the policeman. 'Vot is
dis talk about \$1,000 saples?'.....
"'Correct, Solomonski!' he declared
viciously. 'I paid \$21.50 for the set. I'd
rather have got six months and not have told
it.'"³

- Night Clerk Experiences

"AT ARMS WITH MORPHEUS"⁴ is O. Henry's account of his attempts to save the life of Warden Coffin of Ohio State Penitentiary after he had taken a dose of poisonous drug by mistake, and the violent means that were necessary to keep the patient awake until the ill effects of the drug

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1100-1104.
2. " " " p. 1103.
3. " " " p. 1104.
4. "SIXES AND SEVENS" pp. 662-664.

night, and at dawn Christmas morning slipped noiselessly from his room and fled back to the house where freedom awaited him.

Penitentiary Experiences - Would Not Have an Alibi

O. Henry's desire to be silent and take the consequences rather than speak the truth at his trial finds a counterpart in "Kid" Brady in "VANITY AND SOME SABLES." "Kid" was accused of having stolen a set of \$1,000. sables from a wealthy woman for his girl. One afternoon when Dick and his girl were out walking, a detective stopped them and demanded the furs. Just then a policeman stepped up:

"Once," he said, "I said furs.....
Yes, Dick and Dick's girl.....
You're a kid and Dick's girl.....
"Dick's girl," he said, "is the girl.....
powerful hand upon the policeman's mouth.....
"The secret is out," he said, "and the girl is.....
worth \$20," he said, "the policeman's girl is.....
his talk about \$1,000 sables.....
"Correct, Dick's girl," he declared.....
"I paid \$21.50 for the set," he said.....
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"AT ARMS WITH MORTIMER" is O. Henry's account of his attempts to save the life of Warden Coffin of Ohio State Penitentiary after he had taken a dose of poisonous drug by mistake, and the violent means that were necessary to keep the patient awake until the ill effects of the drug

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP," pp. 1100-1104.
2. " " " " p. 1103.
3. " " " " p. 1104.
4. "SILKS AND SABLES," pp. 682-684.

had worn off.

During his term of service in prison, O. Henry gathered much information from his outlaw friends of the West. "HOLDING UP A TRAIN"¹ is a reproduction of Al Jennings' account of the method of attacking a train, the most advantageous places for an attack, the kind of men who are usually train robbers, and the amusing sights and experiences a robber has in the passenger coaches. Jennings gives reasons for non-resistance on the part of passengers, and reasons why train-robbing as a profession is not a pleasant one.

"THE PASSING OF BLACK EAGLE"² recalls Al Jennings again in the capacity of Black Eagle, the terror of the Mexican border and suggests the method he took of quitting the outlaw band. This story also outlines the plans for attacking an express train at a deserted place on the I. and G. N. Railroad. At a signal from Black Eagle the bandits were to attack. The train ran a little beyond the spot where they expected it to stop; a box car with an open door stopped opposite the leader who got up, leaped into the car, dropped his guns, belt, spurs, and sombrero to the ground, and rode off with the train.

Dick Price, the crack safe-opener, a convict at Ohio State Penitentiary comes into literature in the likeness of Jimmy Valentine, the hero of "A RETRIEVED REFORMATION."³ Although the real method of opening the

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 647-654.
2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", " 336-342.
3. " " " " 342-346.

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"THE ROBBERY OF BLACK RABBIT" recalls Al Jennings

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Mexican border and suggests the method he took of cutting

the outlaw band. This story also outlines the plan for

attacking an express train at a deserted place on the

I. and G. N. Railroad. At a signal from Black Rabbit the

bandits were to attack. The train ran a little beyond

the spot where they expected it to stop; a box car with

an open door stopped opposite the leader who got up,

leaped into the car, dropped his guns, belt, spurs, and

comprised to the ground, and rode off with the train.

Black Rabbit, the track safe-guard, a convict

of Ohio State Penitentiary comes into literature in the

likeness of Frank Valentine, the hero of "A RETRIEVED

REPUTATION." Although the real method of opening the

bank safe was performed by filing the flesh of the finger until the nerve was exposed, and although Jimmy's sentence was not revoked as a reward for his unparalleled skill and kind act, O. Henry used a set of tools and caused Jimmy to gain freedom in the story because he could not endure the cruelty and injustice of the real facts.

The first part of this story pictures O. Henry as he left the prison.

"'Now, Valentine,' said the warden, 'you'll get out in the morning. Brace up and make a man of yourself.'".....

The warden then asked him why he was sent there.

"Was it because you wouldn't prove an alibi for fear of compromising somebody in extremely high-toned society? Or was it simply a case of mean old jury that had it in for you? It's always one or the other with you innocent victims....."

"At a quarter past seven on the next morning Jimmy stood in the warden's outer office. He had on a suit of.....ready-made clothes and a pair of the stiff, squeaky shoes that the state furnishes to its discharged compulsory guests.

"The clerk handed him a railroad ticket and a five dollar bill with which the law expected him to rehabilitate himself into good citizenship and prosperity.¹ The warden gave him a cigar and shook hands. Valentine, 9762, was chronicled on the books 'Pardoned by Governor', and Mr. James Valentine walked into the sunshine."²

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 342.
2. " " " " " 343.

Securing refreshments in a restaurant, he proceeded to the depot. "He tossed a quarter into the hat of a blind man sitting by the door, and boarded his train."

Life in New York - Starting Life Over

Once free from the gloom and oppression of prison walls, O. Henry began to start life over, to begin life anew. His residence in the city of New York where he was unknown enabled him to do this. That the idea of a new start in life had a conspicuous place in his mind is exemplified by a number of stories he wrote. Among these is "THE COP AND THE ANTHEM",¹ the story of a New York tramp by the name of Soapy, who perceiving fall fast approaching, resolved to do something unlawful to assure himself a warm winter refuge. With this in view he entered a restaurant and ordered a satisfying meal. Soon strong hands conveyed him in silence and haste to the sidewalk. Seeing a brilliantly lighted window displaying beautiful wares, he hurled a stone through the window, but instead of running, he stood still and confessed the crime. No one believed him. He next entered a second restaurant, ate a hearty meal, and confessing that he possessed not even the merest coin, two waiters assisted him outside. His next attempt was to take an umbrella and to flirt with a young woman on the street but the cop only smiled at him

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 30-34.

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attempt was to take an umbrella and go off with a young
woman on the street but the cop only smiled at him

curiously. Soapy walked on till he came to a church in which the organist was practicing the Sunday music. He sat down, and listening to the sweet strains of the melody a sudden and wonderful change came upon him - "he would make a man of himself";¹ he would find work to do. "He would be somebody in the world." A hand was placed on his shoulder; a policeman had arrested him for loafing; and he was committed to the Island for three months' imprisonment.

Although O. Henry succeeded in starting life over and was not entrapped again, he realized that most people after making noble resolutions, either thoughtlessly or incautiously fall back into the old paths. "THE PENDULUM"² tells of the monotony of the lives of John and Kate Perkins in a New York flat. After two years of married life John knew precisely what to expect when he came home in the evening, what they would have for supper, how the evening would drag away, until at a quarter after eight he would reach for his hat and go out and play pool with his friends until ten or eleven o'clock. On this particular night when he entered, he found the house silent, his wife was not there, but had left a note saying she had been called to the bedside of her mother who was seriously ill. She would be back in a week or two. John sat in the penetrating silence of the rooms; never before had Kate been away overnight; here was a break in the routine.

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 34.

2. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1077-1079.

seriously. George walked on till he came to a church in which the organist was practicing the Sunday music. He sat down, and listening to the sweet strains of the organ, a sudden and wonderful change came upon him - "he would make a man of himself"; he would find work to do. "He would be somebody in the world." A hand was placed on his shoulder; a policeman had arrested him for loitering; and he was committed to the island for three months' imprisonment.

Although C. Henry succeeded in starting life over and was not entangled again, he realized that most people after making noble resolutions, either thoughtlessly or instinctively fall back into the old paths. "THE PRISONER" tells of the recovery of the lives of John and Kate Barker in a New York flat. After two years of married life John knew precisely what to expect when he came home in the evening, when they would have hot supper, how the evening would drag away, until at a quarter after eight he would wash for his hat and go out and play pool with his friends until ten or eleven o'clock. On this particular night when he entered, he found the house silent, his wife was not there, but had left a note saying she had been called to the bedside of her mother who was seriously ill. She would be back in a week or two. John sat in the parlor waiting silence of the house; never before had there been such a week in the morning.

He meditated. He had not treated her right, he had taken too much for granted; he acknowledged his negligence. Hereafter he would be more thoughtful of her and take her to some amusement occasionally; he would give up his pool and the fellows. Tears came into his eyes. "When she came back, things would be different.....What was life without her?"¹ The door opened and Kate walked in. They were delighted to see each other. Sometime later John looked at the clock - it was exactly eight-fifteen. He put on his hat and went to play pool with his friends.

"THE DISCOUNTERS OF MONEY"² is the story of a young man who had a change of heart as to the purchasing power of money. Howard Pilkens, a young millionaire, thought there was nothing which could not be bought with money. One night he proposed marriage to Alice Von der Ruysling, member of a family who turned down their noses at people who had just money. He referred to "the advantages that his money would provide."³ Alice declined to be enticed by this; but he, unwilling to consider this decision final, asked her if she should change her mind at any time, to send him a rose like the one she then had in her hair. "And when I do, you will understand by it that either you or I have learned something new about the purchasing power of money."⁴ She

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1079.
2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 297-301.
3. " " " p. 298.
4. " " " p. 299.

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1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1079.
2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 297-301.
3. " " " " p. 228.
4. " " " " p. 229.

promised to return to him on the following day, the toy he had given her in his childhood.

On his way home through the park that night, Pilkens sat down on a bench to think. Near him was seated a young couple from Virginia who had eloped and having lost their money were helplessly passing the night there. Pilkens offered them money to get a room at a hotel, but the youth being a true son of the South declined to receive money from a stranger. Twice his money had been refused that evening. He then said that he had a lady friend who would be glad to make the girl comfortable for the night. His offer was accepted and Pilkens took them to Alice's house where they were hospitably received. Before the men left, Alice slipped upstairs, and returning presented Pilkens with a little box. When he got home he opened the box and found the little toy kitten he had given her years before.

"'After all,' he said, 'I don't believe that just money will - '" Then he spied the rose in the bottom of the box. Alice was convinced that Pilkens had found the truth.

Dougherty had been married four years, but he had spent every night of the last three years at Seltzer's playing with the sports of the city. He was vaguely conscious that he had a wife. One morning as he was leaving, Mrs. Dougherty asked if he would take her out to dinner that evening, reminding him that three years had passed since they had been out together. At seven

the first of these is the fact that the

the second of these is the fact that the

the third of these is the fact that the

the fourth of these is the fact that the

the fifth of these is the fact that the

the sixth of these is the fact that the

the seventh of these is the fact that the

the eighth of these is the fact that the

the ninth of these is the fact that the

the tenth of these is the fact that the

the eleventh of these is the fact that the

the twelfth of these is the fact that the

the thirteenth of these is the fact that the

the fourteenth of these is the fact that the

the fifteenth of these is the fact that the

the sixteenth of these is the fact that the

the seventeenth of these is the fact that the

the eighteenth of these is the fact that the

the nineteenth of these is the fact that the

the twentieth of these is the fact that the

the twenty-first of these is the fact that the

the twenty-second of these is the fact that the

the twenty-third of these is the fact that the

the twenty-fourth of these is the fact that the

the twenty-fifth of these is the fact that the

the twenty-sixth of these is the fact that the

the twenty-seventh of these is the fact that the

the twenty-eighth of these is the fact that the

o'clock they walked past the play house to a brilliantly lighted restaurant where they enjoyed a sumptuous repast during which, Honorable Patrick Corrigan, leader of this district and a friend of Dougherty, came over and ate with them. Other friends came and spoke to them. Mrs. Dougherty conversed gaily and with animation. Dougherty himself was mute. Her charm was manifest to his friends, why had he been unaware of it? Gallantly he assisted in putting on her coat, and he felt like a knight of old as they walked home together. At the door Mrs. Dougherty remarked gratefully, "Thank you for taking me out, Jim. You'll be going back to Seltzer's now, of course";¹ but this episode had been "DOUGHERTY'S EYE-OPENER",² and the door closed behind them both.

"THE GUARDIAN OF THE ACCOLADE"³ is the story of a Southern banker, who, having wandered from the high standard of his family, returned to it through the guardianship of a trusty old negro porter-messenger. Robert Weymouth, sixty-two year old president of the Weymouth bank and member of a respected and cultured family had of late indulged in drink which had impaired his capacity for business, and as a result the bank was beginning to show a decrease in its deposits. No one dared to speak to him on the subject of temperance because of his quick temper.

One night Uncle Bushrod, the old negro who had

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", p. 989.
2. " " " " " " pp. 986-989.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 292-297.

been a constant companion of Mr. Robert from his youth, and who was a porter at the bank, had occasion to go to the bank about midnight. While he was there Mr. Robert entered, went to the safe, took out a satchel and departed. Uncle Bushrod, thinking he was robbing the bank and not wishing disgrace to come upon his friend nor his family, followed him to the station where Mr. Robert was waiting for the midnight train. Here he reminded the president of the solemn ceremony that Miss Lucy had bestowed on him in youth saying, "I mek you a knight, Suh Robert - rise up, pure and fearless and widout reproach."¹ Sir Robert recalled that since his wife's death two years before, he had failed somewhat as a knight.

"Marse Robert, gimme dis 'er valise."
When the Weymouths see Miss Lucy "dey must
say dey been livin' pure and fearless and
widout reproach."²

.....
"Take it back with you, Bushrod," said
Mr. Robert, thrusting his hands into his
pockets. 'And let the subject drop - now
mind! You've said quite enough.'" He
boarded the train and was off.

Three hours later when he left the train he met an old school friend waiting in a wagon with fishing rods projecting from the end. "Why didn't you bring along the stuff?"³ he asked. Mr. Robert explained and then replied, "I'm going to quit drinking.....I've come to the conclusion that a man can't keep it up and be

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 295.

2. " " " p. 296.

3. " " " p. 297.

quite what he'd like to be - pure and fearless and without reproach."

- Concealing His Identity - (Real People)

Once out of prison O. Henry determined to forget the past, including his very name, so beginning life anew, he selected a new name for himself, the name by which he is universally known and behind which he constantly shielded himself. Masking under a pseudonym, he saw others doing likewise, hence many of his stories are about actual friends or imaginary ones masquerading under an assumed name or as another person.

The characters in the following stories represent real people concealed behind fictitious names.

Azalia Adair in "A MUNICIPAL REPORT"¹ represents O. Henry's aunt "Lina" Porter, a plain, cultured, kindly soul, his school teacher, and a woman of rare literary ability, highly respected and adored.

"HOLDING UP A TRAIN"² and "THE PASSING OF BLACK EAGLE"³ are stories of his staunch friend, Al Jennings, and his deeds of daring as a bandit in the Southwest.

"A RETRIEVED REFORMATION"⁴ has its source and inspiration in a convict of Ohio State Penitentiary by the name of Dick Price whose life story caused the author much anguish. Price's true nobility of character, exhibited in the one superbly altruistic deed of his life - that of

1. "STRICTLY BUSINESS", pp. 1208-1217.
2. "SIXES AND SEVENS", " 647- 654.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", " 336- 342.
4. " " " " 342- 346.

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- Conscience His Identity - (Real People)

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represent real people concealed behind fictitious names.
Annie Adams in "A NEWSPAPER REPORT" represents
O. Henry's aunt "Anna" Porter, a plain, cultured, kindly
soul, his school teacher, and a woman of rare literary
ability, highly respected and adored.

"HOLDING UP A TRAIN" and "THE FASHION OF BLACK
RAGS" are stories of his staunch friend, Al Jennings,
and his deeds of daring as a bandit in the Southwest.
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1. "STRICTLY BUSINESS", pp. 1208-1214.
2. "SIX AND SEVEN", " " 647-654.
3. "HOLD UP A TRAIN", " " 336-343.
4. "A RETRIRED INFORMATION", " " 343-348.

opening the safe of "The Press-Post Publishing Company" of Columbus to save the life of a child - received O. Henry's devout admiration.

Warden E. G. Coffin of Ohio State Penitentiary became Mr. Hopkins in "AT ARMS WITH MORPHEUS".¹

"THE FOURTH IN SALVADOR"² contains a number of concealed identities. Señor Casparis is O. Henry; Maximillian Jones is Al Jennings; a coffee planter became Martin Dillard; a railroad man was named Henry Barnes; a tintype taker is old man Billyfinger; the Englishman's name is Sterrett.

The principal character, the patient, in "LET ME FEEL YOUR PULSE"⁴ is O. Henry, himself, who is seeking a cure for his illness.

- Concealed Identities - (Not Real People)

Besides these stories representing known recognized characters, the idea of concealing himself and keeping his identity a mystery seems to have had a preëminent place in his mind, and formed the basis for many stories with unknown characters of concealed identity. From the type of story and the fun he produces for the reader in them, one believes he must have enjoyed this game he played with the public.

One of the most interesting of these stories is "ROUGE ET NOIR",⁵ a story inspired by the author's Central

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 662-664.

2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", " 360-366.

4. "SIXES AND SEVENS", " 685-692.

5. "CABBAGES AND KINGS", pp. 517-521.

opening the safe of "The Press-Post Publishing Company" of Columbus to save the life of a child - received O. Henry's devoted admiration.

Walter H. G. Goffin of Ohio State Penitentiary became Mr. Hopkins in "AT ARMS WITH MURDER".¹ "THE FOUNTAIN IN MALABOR"² contains a number of

concealed identities. Señor Gaspar is O. Henry; Maximilian Jones is Al Jennings; a coffee planter becomes Martin Dillard; a railroad man was named Henry Barnes; a steno-typist is old man Billyfinger; the Englishman's name is Sterrett.

The principal character, the patient, in "LET ME TELL YOUR PICTURE" is O. Henry, himself, who is seeking a cure for his illness.

- Concealed Identities - (Not Real People)

Besides these stories representing known

recognized characters, the idea of concealing himself and keeping his identity a mystery seems to have had a prominent place in his mind, and formed the basis for many stories with unknown characters of concealed identity. From the type of story and the fun he produced for the reader in them, one believes he must have enjoyed this game he played with the public.

One of the most interesting of these stories is

"ROUGE ET NOIR",³ a story inspired by the author's Central

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 558-564.
2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 550-562.
3. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 555-562.
4. "CARRIAGES AND KINGS", pp. 517-521.

American experience. President Losada was not particularly esteemed among his people. He had imposed new taxes and new import duties; and a general oppression prevailed in the land. An extra real on each bunch of bananas sold to the "Vesuvius Fruit Company, an organization having twelve ships and with cash and capital somewhat larger than the Anchurian surplus and debt combined", had been imposed.

Toward the end of the president's second year in office, a celebration in his honor was given in Coralio. The president and his retinue arrived and drove through the silent throng to the Casa Morena where General Pilar, hero of three wars and most distinguished citizen made the principal address of the day at the end of which address he was to present the president with the keys of the city. His speech took a historical trend - he reviewed the history of the state bearing special emphasis on the noble character and splendid achievements of Olivarra, "the Good", who had been one of them and who had died at the hands of an assassin. As he spoke these last words he looked at President Losada who was suspected of instigating the murder. Then he asked if any one remembered Ramon, son of Olivarra. All this time a young man with red hair evidently unknown stood among the throng. With these words of the general, he took off his hat, tore off his shock of red hair, and stood by the general's side, the image of his father in youth, having a lion-like pose, a frank undaunted expression, high forehead and crisp

American experience. President Lora was not

particularly esteemed among his people. He had imposed new taxes and new import duties; and a general oppression prevailed in the land. An extra real on each bunch of bananas sold to the "Vasquez Fruit Company," an organization having twelve ships and with cash and capital somewhat larger than the American surplus and debt combined, had been imposed.

Toward the end of the president's second year

in office, a celebration in his honor was given in Gervilla. The president and his retinue arrived and drove through the silent throng to the Casa Morana where General Elmer, hero of three wars and most distinguished citizen made the principal address of the day at the end of which address he was to present the president with the keys of the city. His speech took a historical trend - he reviewed the history of the state bearing special emphasis on the noble character and splendid achievements of Olivares, "the Good" who had been one of them and who had died at the hands of an assassin. As he spoke these last words he looked at President Lora who was suspected of instigating the murder. Then he asked if any one remembered Ramon, son of Olivares. All this time a young man with red hair evidently unknown stood among the throng. With those words of the general, he took off his hat, tore off his shock of red hair, and stood by the general's side, the image of his father in youth, having a lion-like pose, a frank unfettered expression, high forehead and eyes

black hair.

"'Citizens of Anchuria,' exclaimed the general, 'Shall I deliver them (the keys) to Enrico Olivarra's assassin or to his son?'

"'Olivarra! Olivarra!' the crowd shrieked and howled."¹

Olivarra's widow was wealthy. After the death of her husband she had taken her son, gone to the United States, and had educated her son at Yale. The Vesuvius Fruit Company had hunted him up in this crisis and backed him.

Several stories in "CABBAGES AND KINGS" leave the reader mystified, but the last chapter of the book, "TWO RECALLS",² clears up the mysteries. President Miraflores of the Anchurian Republic had abdicated and fled with his daughter, and one hundred five thousand dollars belonging to the government. Guards were secretly stationed to capture them. A man and woman answering their description stealthily stole into the hotel in Coralio one night. Goodwin followed them in, and when the man saw him, he killed himself. "TWO RECALLS" explains that Goodwin did not capture President Miraflores but a Mr. J. Churchill Wahrfield and his daughter, the former of whom had absconded with one hundred thousand dollars of the Republic Insurance Company of New York in his possession. Goodwin returned the money to the insurance company in two weeks, and later married

1. "CABBAGES AND KINGS", p. 520.

2. " " " " pp. 521-526.

black hair.

"Citizens of Annapolis," exclaimed the
 general, "shall I deliver them (the boys)
 to Justice Oliver's assassin or to his
 agent?"
 "Justice Oliver," the crowd
 shouted and howled.

Justice Oliver's widow was wealthy. After the
 death of her husband she had taken her son, gone to the
 United States, and had educated her son at Yale. The
 Insurance Trust Company had hunted him up in this crisis
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 former of whom had absconded with one hundred thousand
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 his possession. Goodwin returned the money to the
 insurance company in two weeks, and later married

Miss Wahrfield.

When Mr. Wahrfield, president of the insurance company, disappeared, Shorty O'Day, best detective of the company, was sent to find and bring him and the money back. When O'Day arrived in Coralio he discovered his captives in an insignificant house of the town. He got them on the ship and then counted the money in the satchel - one hundred five thousand dollars. Arriving in New York, the detective turned over his captives to the company, who after questioning, discovered they were none other than President Miraflores of Anchuria and his daughter.

"AFTER TWENTY YEARS"¹ relates that two friends, Bob and Jimmy, eighteen and twenty, respectively, ate their last meal together in Big Joe Brady's restaurant the night before Bob left for the West to seek his fortune. During the dinner they planned to return to the same spot at the same time twenty years hence, each confident that the other would remember and be there. The night arrived, windy and rainy; the policeman found a man standing in the dark entrance of a store and began to talk with him. When the stranger lighted his cigar, the policeman glanced at his face and saw the diamond pin in his tie. He passed on, trying doors along the street. In twenty minutes a plainclothesman came and arrested him delivering a note from the policeman, who

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 69-71.

Miss Warrfield.

When Mr. Warrfield, president of the insurance company, disappeared, George O'Leary, best detective of the company, was sent to find and bring him and the money back. When O'Leary arrived in Detroit, he discovered his captive in an insignificant house of the town. He got them on the ship and then counted the money in the sack - one hundred five thousand dollars. Arriving in New York, the detective turned over his captive to the company, who after questioning, discovered they were none other than President Warrfield's son and his daughter.

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was his old friend, Jimmy, who had met him on time, and who had recognized him as the man the Chicago police were hunting. As a friend he could not arrest Bob, so he had sent some one else.

In a "DOUBLE-DYED DECEIVER",¹ O. Henry portrays another character who concealed his real self. The Llano Kid had killed a youth about his own age in a game of chess and escaped on a ship in a harbor on the Gulf coast. Landing at Buenas Tierras on the coast of South America, he went immediately to confer with the consul there. In the city lived a middle-aged couple of Spaniards named Urique whose son when he was eight years old had run away to Texas, they believed. Although they had spent thousands of dollars searching for him they had never heard from him. The mother still mourned his loss. The consul asked the Kid if he would be willing to act as their son and have a flying eagle carrying a spear in his claws tattooed on the back of his hand like their son had had. The boy conceded to this proposal as well as that of getting the Señor's money, after which the two would escape and go to Rio Janeiro. Señor and Señora Urique claimed the boy as their son and took him home where he had all the comforts of wealth and the confidence of a son. Señora Urique was happy to reclaim her son and thanked God for his return. A month later the consul sent for the boy,

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 329-335.

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now Don Francisco Urique, who stated his unwillingness to disturb the Señor's money. The consul threatened to expose him. Don Francisco thrust his .45 against the consul's chest saying the Señora had suffered once, he would never cause her to suffer the second time; furthermore, the boy he had shot in Texas had the same kind of a picture on his hand.

One day O. Henry went into a restaurant called Old Munich. As he sat at a table he saw in a recess on the stairs a statue of an ancient halberdier. It impressed him as unique and suggested the story of "THE HALBERDIER OF THE LITTLE RHEINSCHLOSS"¹ in which the halberdier is not a statue but a real person.

O. Henry was a Southerner and knew the eccentricities of the older generation. "A GHOST OF A CHANCE"² tells how a Southern lady resented her friend's story of having seen an ancestor's ghost carrying a hod of brick. Terrence, the son, distressed because his mother worried about this story asked Mrs. Bellmore, who occupied the guest room in the old mansion to relieve his mother by relating another and more pleasant story of an ancestor. At breakfast the last morning of her visit, she told them that she had that night seen a ghost dressed in full Colonial costume, with powdered hair, lace ruffles, and a sword. Mrs. Kinsolving was delighted, for the description fitted

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 411-416.

2. "SIXES AND SEVENS", " 665-669.

now Don Francisco Urquiza, who stated his willingness to disturb the author's money. The consul threatened to expose him. Don Francisco threw his arms against the consul's chest saying the secret had suffered once, he would never allow her to suffer the second time. Furthermore, the boy he had shot in Texas had the same kind of a picture on his hand.

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that of one of their ancestors of the Revolution. The next morning Terrence mailed to a New York costumer, a package containing "a gentleman's costume of the days of '76 made of white satin, with silver buckles, white silk stockings, and white kid shoes", a powdered wig and a sword.

"THE DUPLICITY OF HARGRAVES"¹ pictures Major Pendleton Talbot of Mobile, a gentleman of the old school, dressed in a ragged, pleated shirt, string tie, and "Father Hubbard" coat, and his daughter living in a boarding house in Washington, D. C. Their money was almost gone; nevertheless the Major bought two tickets to "A Magnolia Flower", a show which he heard did justice to the South. They were amazed during the second scene to recognize a fellow boarder and friend, Mr. Hargraves, playing the part of Colonel Calhoun and dressed in an exact copy of the Major's costume, and using his manners, actions, and stories. The Major was indignant over it and the next day when Hargraves came to call and announce his success, the Major asked him to leave. Knowing the Major was penniless and in debt, he offered him money as a peace offering, but the Major would not accept it. A few days later an old negro, Cindy's Mose from Nebraska, a slave whom his father had freed, came to call and to return the three hundred dollars he had received for the mules which the Major's father had given him for the trip.

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 678-685.

that of one of their associates of the Revolution. The
 next morning Torrence called to a New York restaurant, a
 package containing "a gentleman's costume of the days
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"THE DUTY OF HARRIS" pictures Major

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 school, dressed in a ragged, stained shirt, sitting in
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 boarding house in Washington, D. C. Their money was
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 to "A Mysterious Flower", a show which he heard did justice
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 money which the Major's father had given him for the trip.

It was agreed that if he were able at any time he could return the price of the mules. Since the old master was dead the money devolved upon the Major, who accepted the money, thanked him, and wept tears of joy on the old negro's shoulder. A week later the Major's daughter received a note from Hargraves who was earning two hundred dollars a week in New York, stating that the three hundred dollars was a reward to her father for the help he had rendered him in studying his part in "A Magnolia Flower". Then he added the postscript: "How did I play Uncle Mose?"

In "THIMBLE, THIMBLE"¹ as in the other stories representing concealed identities, the unknown or masked character is at last identified, so in the life of the author; he hid behind the name of O. Henry for eight years, then his identity became known. In this story O. Henry shows keen insight into the character of Northerner, Southerner, and the Negro. Two young men, cousins, one of Northern, the other of Southern stock had been in business together for ten years in New York City. Both were intelligent, clean cut, and looked very much alike. Blandford Carteret's mother wrote that their old slave, Uncle Jake, seventy-six, was on his way to visit him, and that he was bringing to present to the son, his father's watch which he himself had rescued from his master's pocket the day he was shot in battle. The two young men decided to make Uncle Jake decipher which was Marse

1. "OPTIONS", pp. 558-564.

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In "THINKING" as in the other stories representing concealed identities, the unknown or masked character is at last identified, so in the life of the author; he hid behind the name of O. Henry for eight years, then his identity became known. In this story O. Henry shows keen insight into the character of Harpster, Southerner and the Negro. Two young men, cousins, one of Northern, the other of Southern stock had been in business together for ten years in New York City. Both were intelligent, clean cut, and looked very much alike. Harpster's mother wrote that their old slave, Uncle Jake, seventy-six, was on his way to visit him, and that he was bringing to present to the son, his father's watch which he himself had rescued from his master's pocket the day he was shot in battle. The two young men decided to make Uncle Jake designer which was Harpster's

Blandford, whereupon they greeted him together, and uttered parts of sentences by turns until the old man was quite confused. A call from a young stage actress brought out conversation which identified the son of the South. When the woman had departed, the old colored man rose and came toward them. "'Young marster,' he said, 'take yo' watch.' And without further hesitation he laid the ancient time-piece in the hand of its rightful owner."¹

- "What's Just Around the Corner" Attitude

Life was a curious thing for O. Henry, it was not drab, but full of activity and surprise; every person, every incident possessed something of interest for him. He had the attitude of curiosity, of finding out what was just around the corner. What's around the corner is always something unlooked for, unexpected. The following stories illustrate this quality of the author's character.

The streets of the metropolis provided ample opportunity for O. Henry to spy around corners. In "THE CLARION CALL"² two friends met on Broadway in New York. Woods was a detective who recognized Kernan as the man who had murdered Millionaire Norcross and stolen fifteen thousand dollars worth of jewelry at the same time from his wife. Woods, however, was powerless; he could not arrest the murderer because he owed him a thousand dollars which he was unable to pay. Kernan knew he was

1. "OPTIONS", p. 564.

2. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 1040-1044.

Blanchard, whereupon they greeted him together, and uttered parts of sentences by turns until the old man was quite confused. A call from a young stage actress brought out conversation which identified the son of the South. When the woman had departed, the old colored man rose and came toward them. "Young master," he said, "take yo' watch." And without further hesitation he laid the ancient time-piece in the hand of its rightful owner.

- "What's Just Around the Corner" Attitude

Life was a curious thing for G. Henry, it was not dull, but full of activity and surprise; every person, every incident possessed something of interest for him. He had the attitude of curiosity, of finding out what was just around the corner. - What's around the corner is always something unlooked for, unexpected. The following stories illustrate this quality of the author's character. The attitude of the metropolitan provided ample

opportunity for G. Henry to get around corners. In "THE ORIGIN GALL" two friends met on Broadway in New York. Woods was a detective who recognized Kerman as the man who had murdered William Horvath and stolen fifteen thousand dollars worth of jewelry at the same time from his wife. Woods, however, was powerless; he could not arrest the murderer because he owed him a thousand dollars which he was unable to pay. Kerman knew he was

safe in Wood's hands and at a restaurant table at four o'clock that morning boldly related all the facts of the case and called up the editor of the "Morning Mars", a newspaper which had a record for solving mystery murder cases, saying he was the murderer of Mr. Norcross, that he was in the city, and had the jewels in his suitcase. The next morning the "Morning Mars" offered a thousand dollars reward for the arrest of Kernan. Woods took out his pencil and wrote

"The New York 'Morning Mars':
Please pay to the order of John
Kernan the one thousand dollars reward
coming to me for his arrest and conviction.
Barnard Woods."

"ROSES, RUSES, AND ROMANCE"¹ gives us another unexpected climax. Ravenel, a poet, and Sam Brown, a broker's clerk, sat in the former's room which overlooked a beautiful garden in the rear of an old mansion, where lived an old man and his daughter. Ravenel was discouraged, although some of his poems had been published. He read one "The Four Roses" which Brown praised, then announcing he had a date at five o'clock, he departed. The following day Ravenel admiring the garden, looked higher and saw four roses in individual vases and a nutmeg geranium in the window above. Curiosity led him to look up the meaning - he found "Geranium, nutmeg - I expect a meeting."² At four-thirty that afternoon Brown dropped in to see him, but immediately announced

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 1021-1024.

2. " " " " " p. 1023.

he would have to leave as he had a date. Ravenel, irritated, asked him to explain. "'Roses,' said Sammy briefly. 'Four of 'em today. Means four o'clock at the corner of Broadway and Twenty Third.'" And the geranium "'Means half-past,' shouted Sammy from the hall. 'See you tomorrow.'"¹

O. Henry did not care for theatres or vaudeville and seldom attended a performance. One day he did attend a vaudeville and during one of the acts an actress, as was her custom, threw into the audience a garter which dropped into O. Henry's lap. This incident became the foundation on which he built the story called "THE MEMENTO"² in which a young actress, disgusted with men, has given up her profession to teach elocution. While living at a private house on Long Island she fell in love with a young minister who roomed in the same house. Incidentally the landlady informed Miss D'Armande that the minister had had a very romantic love affair which had ended unhappily and that he had a keepsake from her in a little rosewood box which he kept locked in his desk. That afternoon the minister told her about his ideal love whom he had never met but whom he had adored from a distance. This was a new conception of love to Miss D'Armande for which she admired him the more. Suddenly he was called away to minister to a sick parishioner. Walking past his room she saw his keys dangling from his desk; she went in, opened the rosewood

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", p. 1024.

2. " " " " " " 1055-1060.

box, closed it, went to her room, packed her trunk and left that afternoon; for inside the box reposed one of the yellow garters that she used to kick into the audience during her old vaudeville swing act.

A paragraph from "THE GREEN DOOR"¹ betrays the real O. Henry in his search for adventure.

"Rudolph Steiner was a true adventurer. Few were the evenings on which he did not go forth from his.....bedroom in search of the unexpected and the egregious. The most interesting thing in life seemed to him to be what might lie just around the next corner. Sometimes his willingness to tempt fate led him into strange paths.....But with undiminished ardor he picked up every glove cast before him into the merry lists of adventure."²

Rudolph Steiner passing along a crowded street was handed a card on which were printed the words "The Green Door". He gazed at it and wondered what it meant. A man ahead dropped his card. Rudolph picked it up. This card disclosed the name and address of a dentist. He crossed the street, went back, and again passed the man who was distributing the curious cards. On the third card again was printed "The Green Door". Rudolph stopped, thought, and after surveying the building ran up the stairs. The dentist's office was on the second floor; he ascended farther till he reached the top floor which was dimly lighted with gas. Looking around he discovered a green door on which he knocked. A faint sound was heard

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 50-54.

2. " " " " p. 51

within; presently the door opened and on a bed Rudolph observed a girl, apparently sick. He went in, discovered she had had nothing to eat for two days, and was, therefore, faint. He hurried out and soon came back with two arms full of food from which he prepared for her a dainty lunch which she ate. Afterwards she fell asleep. Rudolph, promising to return the following day, departed. As he left the building he noticed that every door he passed was painted green and he wondered what had led him to that particular door. On the street he asked the distributor the meaning of his cards.

"'Dar it is, boss,' he said pointing down the street. 'But I 'spect you is a little late for de fust act.'

"Looking the way he pointed Rudolph saw above the entrance to a theatre the blazing electric sign of its new play, 'The Green Door'.....

"'All the same,' he said, 'I believe it was the hand of Fate that doped out the way for me to find her.'

"Which conclusion, under the circumstances, certainly admits Rudolph Steiner to the ranks of the true followers of Romance and Adventure."¹

The introductory paragraphs of this story explain O. Henry's meaning of a true adventurer.

"True adventurers have never been plentiful.....The true adventurer goes forth aimless and uncalculating to meet and greet unknown fate."²

.....

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 54.
2. " " " " 50.

"In the big city the twin spirits Romance and Adventure are always abroad seeking worthy wooers. As we roam the streets they slyly peep at us and challenge us in twenty different guises. Without knowing why, we look up suddenly to see in a window a face that seems to belong to our gallery of intimate portraits; in a sleeping thoroughfare we hear a cry of agony and fear coming from an empty and shuttered house; instead of at our familiar curb a cab-driver deposits us before a strange door, which one, with a smile, opens for us and bids us enter; a slip of paper, written upon, flutters down to our feet from the high lattices of Chance; we exchange glances of instantaneous hate; affection, and fear with hurrying strangers in the passing crowds; a sudden souse of rain - and our umbrella may be sheltering the daughter of the Full Moon and first cousin of the Sidereal System; at every corner handkerchiefs drop, fingers beckon, eyes besiege, and the lost, the lonely, the rapturous, the mysterious, the perilous changing clues of adventure are slipped into our fingers."

- Visits Saloons, Cheap Restaurants,
And Cafés To View Life

That it was a common custom of O. Henry's to visit cafés, saloons, and cheap restaurants for his own pleasure and to view life cannot be denied for he makes innumerable references to particular ones in many of his stories.

In "CHERCHEZ LA FEMME"¹ we find several quotations which may well refer to the habits of the author himself.

"They were seated where they had a habit of meeting - in the little Creole-haunted café of Madame Tibault, in Dumaine Street. If you know the place you will

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 346-351.

"In the big city the twin spirits
 Romance and Adventure are always abroad
 seeking worthy workers. As we roam the
 streets they elude us and
 challenge us in twenty different guises.
 Without knowing why, we look up suddenly
 to see in a window a face that seems to
 belong to our gallery of intimate
 portraits; in a sleeping thoroughfare we
 hear a cry of agony and fear coming from
 an empty and shuttered house; instead of
 our familiar and old-driver domestic
 we before a strange door, which one, with
 a smile, opens for us and bids us enter;
 a slip of paper, written upon, flutters
 down to our feet from the high lattices
 of chance; we exchange glances of
 instantaneous hate, affection, and fear
 with hurrying strangers in the passing
 crowd; a sudden noise of rain - and our
 umbrella may be sheltering the daughter
 of the Full Moon and first cousin of the
 Bitterest System; at every corner handker-
 chiefs drop, fingers beckon, eyes beseege,
 and the least, the loneliest, the vagabond,
 the mysterious, the restless changing
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 fingers."

- Visit to London, Cheap Restaurants,
and a Visit to the City.

That it was a common custom of G. Henry's to
 visit cafés, saloons, and cheap restaurants for his own
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In "THE BROTHER IN THE" we find several quotations
 which may well refer to the habits of the author himself.

"They were seated where they had a
 habit of meeting - in the little Opéra-
 house of Madame Tivoli, in Paris."
 Street. If you know the place you will

experience a thrill of pleasure in recalling it to mind. It is small and dark with six little polished tables, at which you may sit and drink the best coffee in New Orleans, and concoctions of absinthe equal to Sazerac's best....."¹

"Dumars.....was sipping his absinthe with half-closed eyes, in a swirl of cigarette smoke."

After they discovered that the statue was gilded lead Dumars said, "I must have a drink.".....

"Together they walked moodily to the café of Madame Tibault....

"'You mustn't sit by those table,' she interposed, as they were about to drop into their accustomed seats."²

After the missing money had been found pasted on the wall of Madame Tibault's special café room to hide a crack, the men felt relieved.

"'Marsy,' said Robbins, 'I'm going on a jamboree.....I advise you to join me. Now, that green stuff you drink is no good. It stimulates thought. What we want to do is to forget to remember. I'll introduce you to the only lady in this case that is guaranteed to produce the desired results. Her name is Belle of Kentucky, twelve year old Bourbon. In quarts. How does the idea strike you?'

"'Allons!' said Dumars. 'Cherchez la femme.'"³

In "ULYSSES AND THE DOGMAN"⁴ Sam Telfair and Jim Berry stop at every saloon along the street and get a drink of whiskey.

"A COSMOPOLITE IN A CAFE"⁵ presents a typical

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 347.
2. " " " " 350.
3. " " " " 351.
4. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 654-657.
5. "THE FOUR MILLION", " 10-13.

experience a thrill of pleasure in recalling it to mind. It is a small dark with six little polished tables, at which you may sit and drink the best coffee in New Orleans, and conversation of affairs usual to business men. "Dumars... was sitting at the table with half-dressed eyes, in a swirl of cigarette smoke."

After they discovered that the statue was killed Jean Dumars said, "I must have a drink.".....

"Remember they walked slowly to the cafe of Madame Tibault... You mustn't sit by those tables, she interposed, as they were about to drop into their accustomed seats."

After the missing money had been found nested on the wall of Madame Tibault's ancestral parlour to his a stroke, the man felt relieved.

"Marry," said Robinson, "I'm going on a journey.... I advise you to join me. Now, that given about you think is no good. It stimulates thought. That we want to do is to forget to remember. I'll introduce you to the only lady in this case that is guaranteed to produce the desired results. Her name is Belle at Kentucky, twelve years old Bourbonian. In quiet. How does the idea strike you?" "All right," said Dumars. "Observe in haste."

In "THEY AND THE DOGMAS" Sam Teller and Jim Berry stop at every saloon along the street and get a drink of whiskey.

"A CORRUPTIBLE IN A GATE" presents a typical

1. "BOARDS OF DESTRUCTION" p. 347.
2. " " " 350.
3. " " " 351.
4. "RIDERS AND SEVERAL" pp. 352-357.
5. "THE FOUR MILLION" 10-12.

scene in a New York café and the part O. Henry took in these surroundings.

"At midnight the café was crowded. By some chance the little table at which I sat had escaped the eye of incomers, and two vacant chairs at it extended their arms with venal hospitality to the influx of patrons.

"And then a cosmopolite sat in one of them, and I was glad....."¹

"I invoke your consideration of the scene - the marble-topped tables, the range of leather-upholstered wall seats, the gay company, the ladies dressed in demi-state toilets, speaking in an exquisite visible chorus of taste, economy, opulence or art; the sedulous and largess-loving garçons, the music wisely catering to all with its raids upon the composers; the melange of talk and laughter - and, if you will, the Würzburger in the tall glass cones that bend to your lips as a ripe cherry sways on its branch to the beak of a robber jay."²

This night, O. Henry and his friend, E. Rushmore Coglan, talked of various themes but their conversation was principally on the subject of the citizen of the world.

"Expression on these subjects was precipitated from E. Rushmore Coglan by the third comer to our table.....The orchestra glided into a medley. The concluding air was 'Dixie', and as the exhilarating notes tumbled forth, they were almost overpowered by a great clapping of hands from almost every table.

".....This remarkable scene can be witnessed every evening in numerous cafés in the City of New York. Tons of brew have been consumed over theories to account for it."³

"When 'Dixie' was being played a dark-haired young man sprang from somewhere with

1. "THE FOUR MILLION, p. 10.
2. " " " pp. 10-11.
3. " " " p. 11.

a Mosby guerilla yell and waved frantically his soft-brimmed hat. Then he strayed through the smoke, dropped into the vacant chair at our table and pulled out cigarettes.

"The evening was at the period when reserve was thawed. One of us mentioned three Würzburgers to the waiter; the dark-haired young man acknowledged his inclusion in the order by a smile and a nod. I hastened to ask him a question because I wanted to try out a theory I had."¹

"My cosmopolite made a large adieu and left me, for he thought he saw some one through the chatter and smoke he knew. So I was left with the would-be periwinkle....

"I sat reflecting upon my evident cosmopolite and wondering how the poet had managed to miss him. He was my discovery and I believed in him."²

- Interest In Working Girls

More than any other writer, O. Henry was interested in the working girls of the city. That this is true may be seen through the various phases of their lives that he portrays in his stories. He warns them of the snares and pitfalls they may encounter in finding work, he compares their ideals and ambitions in society and marriage, he pictures their sacrificial spirit for the pleasure of another, and their poverty which makes them willing to share the little they have with the little of another, or makes them desperate and causes them to attempt to free themselves from further distress, and shows their lack of educational advantages which makes it impossible for them to realize there is a vast world beyond the limits of their daily rounds. The

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 12.
2. " " " " p. 13.

following stories illustrate these matters as the author observed them in actual life.

"ELSIE IN NEW YORK"¹ is the story of a girl by the name of Elsie whose father, a cutter for "Fox and Otter" furs and cloaks, had died after a year's illness leaving Elsie two dollars and fifty cents and a letter from his employer "offering to do anything he could to help his faithful old employee."² Elsie started out to find employment, but failing to find "Fox and Otter" she entered an Employment Agency, a confectionery store, a dress-making shop, an artificial flower shop, but everywhere she was warned of the evils attending the business, whereupon she left in despair. At last wandering along a street she saw the sign she was seeking. Upon entering, she sent her card and the precious letter to the proprietor, who in memory of the efficient and valuable service of Mr. Beatty, employed his charming daughter.

In "THE TRIMMED LAMP"³ O. Henry pictures two types of working girls he had observed. Lou, a piece-work ironer in a laundry receiving \$18.50 a week, satisfied, gaudily and unbecomingly dressed, expects some day to marry a millionaire and dress in furs and live lavishly. Nancy, handkerchief clerk in a dry-goods store receiving \$8 a week, who wears plain cheap clothes, expects to rise higher in life and each day

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1148-1153.

2. " " " p. 1149.

3. " " " pp. 1063-1069.

learns something in preparation for her promotion. Almost every day after work these two girls met at the corner where Lou's friend, Dan, joined them and either took them to dinner or to the theatre. The girls constantly found fault with each other's clothes, manners, and ambitions in life, but still remained true.

"I do not suppose," says the author, "that many look upon a great department store as an educational institution. But the one in which Nancy worked was something like that to her. She was surrounded with beautiful things that breathed of taste and refinement. If you live in an atmosphere of luxury, luxury is yours whether your money pays for it, or another's.

"The people whom she served were mostly women whose dress, manners, and position in the social world were quoted as criterions...

"From one she would copy and practice a gesture, from another an eloquent lifting of the eyebrow, from others, a manner of walking, of carrying a purse, of smiling, of greeting a friend....."¹

This sort of education gave her poise which attracted admirers to her; but she learned to read people, too. Truth, honor, and kindness were qualities she prized in man and one who possessed them not, was not worthy of her attention. One night as she crossed the street to meet Lou, she met Dan with a queer strained expression on his face. Lou had not been to work for several days, but that afternoon had been seen riding with a millionaire in a handsome new car. Dan had theatre tickets in his pocket, consequently he and Nancy used them.

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1065

learn something in preparation for her promotion. Almost every day after work these two girls met at the corner where Lou's friend, Dan, joined them and either took them to dinner or to the theatre. The girls constantly found fault with each other's clothes, manners, and ambitions in life, but still remained true.

"I do not suppose," says the author, "that many look upon a great department store as an educational institution. But the one in which Nancy worked was something like that to her. She was surrounded with beautiful things that breathed of taste and refinement. If you live in an atmosphere of luxury, luxury is yours whether your money pays for it or whether not. The people whom she served were mostly women whose dress, manners, and position in the social world were noted as brilliant. From one she would copy and practice a gesture, from another an elegant lifting of the eyebrow, from others a manner of walking, of carrying a parasol, of smiling, of greeting a friend. . . ."

This sort of education gave her police which attracted admirers to her; but she learned to read people, too. Truth, honor, and kindness were qualities she prized in men and one who possessed them not, was not worthy of her attention. One night as she crossed the street to meet Lou, she met Dan with a queer strained expression on his face. Lou had not been to work for several days, but that afternoon had been seen riding with a millionaire in a handsome new car. Dan had theatre tickets in his pocket, consequently he and Nancy used them.

Three months later Lou and Nancy met in a park and embraced each other. Lou chided Nancy about her shabby clothes and about the "big catch" she intended to find. When Nancy told her she was going to marry Dan, "the biggest catch in the world",¹ Lou burst into tears; "why, Lou!" said Nancy.

The author, in "THE PURPLE DRESS"² shows keen insight into the heart of a working girl who saved a little from her salary each week that she might buy a dress to wear to her only festal occasion during the year and then sacrificed that pleasure for the benefit of another; but in this story the sacrifice is crowned with the desired object.

Maida had saved all year just enough money to buy material and have a purple dress made ready for the annual Thanksgiving dinner at the store. Grace planned to buy a red one, ready-made. Both were sure they had chosen the color Mr. Ramsey admired best. Mr. Ramsey was the head clerk who was to be taken into the firm the next year, so he was worth striving for. The day before Thanksgiving Maida was to call for her dress and pay the final four dollars which she had hid away in her dresser drawer. Before she left, however, Grace came in crying, saying the landlady had set her trunk in the hall and was putting her out because she owed four dollars rent. Maida gave her the four dollars. Thanksgiving Day Grace came in

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1069.

2. " " " " pp. 1107-1110.

all dressed for the party, but Maida said her dress was not finished and that she was not going. She stayed home all day. Just before dusk she went for her dress which Schlegel said she could pay for as she could. Putting the dress on, she walked out into the rainy November night as if it were midsummer. At a corner she came face to face with Mr. Ramsey who said,

"Why, Miss Maida, you look simply magnificent in your new dress. I was greatly disappointed not to see you at our dinner. And of all the girls I ever knew, you show the greatest sense and intelligence. There is nothing more healthful and invigorating than braving the weather as you are doing. May I walk with you?"¹

One day in the hotel where he stayed O. Henry was hungry but lacked the money with which to get a meal. Walking up and down the hall, he met a girl who invited him to help eat a stew of which she had made too much. He gratefully accepted the invitation. A few nights later when he wished to repay her kindness she was gone. This incident may have suggested "THE THIRD INGREDIENT"² which tells of an apartment house girl who suddenly losing her position as clerk with only fifteen cents in her purse, spent half that amount to buy meat for a stew for her evening meal. Going to the cupboard she found neither potatoes nor onions with which to make the stew. In the hall she met a "miniature" painter who had only two

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1110.

2. "OPTIONS", pp. 537-544.

all dressed for the party, but Maida said her dress was not finished and that she was not going. She stayed home all day. Just before dark she went for her dress which Schlegel said she could pay for as she could. Putting the dress on, she walked out into the rainy November night as it were midnight. At a corner she came face to face with Mr. Ramsey who said,

"Why, Miss Maida, you look simply magnificent in your new dress. I was greatly disappointed not to see you at our dinner. And of all the girls I ever knew, you show the greatest sense and intelligence. There is nothing more beautiful and interesting than braving the weather as you are doing. May I walk with you?"

One day in the hotel where he stayed O. Henry was hungry but lacked the money with which to get a meal. Walking up and down the hall, he met a girl who invited him to help eat a stew of which she had made too much. He gratefully accepted the invitation. A few nights later when he wished to repay her kindness she was gone. This incident may have suggested "THE THIRD IMPROBABILITY" which tells of an apartment house girl who suddenly losing her position as clerk with only fifteen cents in her purse, spent half that amount to buy meat for a stew for her evening meal. Going to the cupboard she found neither potatoes nor onions with which to make the stew. In the hall she met a "miniature" painter who had only two

potatoes in her possession. They decided to combine their ingredients, but Hetty wanted an onion to give the stew flavor. Neither of them had one. Cecelia began to cry. Hetty comforted her and listened to the story of her futile effort to get some work from a man across the river, and that returning on the ferry she had cast herself into the river. A man seeing her had rescued her, but she had not seen him since. Hetty went into the hall to get more water for the stew and saw a man with an onion descending the stairs. She coaxed him for the onion which he at last gave up, accepting her invitation to eat with them and not the raw onion which he usually ate when he had a cold, adding that he had caught this cold by jumping in the river to save a girl a few days before.

"'Little brother,' she said, 'go in there. The little fool you fished out of the river is there waiting for you. Go on in.....Potatoes is in there, waiting. Go in, Onions.'....."

"'But it's us,' she said grimly, to herself, 'it's us that furnished the beef.'"¹

O. Henry's understanding of the social conditions under which the working girl exists and the carelessness of apartment house owners in failing to provide parlors in the houses where girls may entertain company, making it necessary for them to make friends on the street, in the parks, and on the ferries, is clearly evidenced in "BRICK DUST ROW".²

1. "OPTIONS", p. 544.

2. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1093-1097.

potatoes in her possession. They decided to combine their ingredients, but Betty wanted an onion to give the stew flavor. Neither of them had one. Betty began to cry. Betty comforted her and listened to the story of her futile effort to get some work from a man across the river, and that returning on the ferry she had cast herself into the river. A man seeing her had reached her, but she had not seen him since. Betty went into the hall to get more water for the stew and saw a man with an onion descending the stairs. She coaxed him for the onion which he at last gave up, accepting her invitation to eat with them and not the raw onion which he usually ate when he had a cold, adding that he had caught this cold by jumping in the river to save a girl a few days before.

"Little brother," she said, "go in there. The little fool you flamed out of the river is there waiting for you. Go on in. . . . Potatoes is in there. Wait. . . . Go in, Olanah. . . ."

"But it's me," she said grimly, "I myself, it's me that furnished the best."

O. Henry's understanding of the social conditions under which the working girl exists and the carelessness of apartment house owners in failing to provide parlors in the houses where girls may entertain company, making it necessary for them to make friends on the street, in the parks, and on the terrace, is clearly evidenced in "When the Moon Was Full."

Blinker, heir to millions "in land, tenements, and hereditaments", was displeased that he had to remain in the city until the next day to sign his name to thirty legal documents. Lawyer Oldport had taken him around one time and shown him his property and Blinker had been amused at the queer-looking houses that piled up such large sums in the bank for him to spend. Because he was angry today he boarded a boat for Coney Island. The boat was crowded, and he made the acquaintance of a pretty girl whom he entertained on the island all afternoon. When they returned to the city in the evening, Blinker intended to take the girl home, but she objected. Then she explained that it was essential that girls should meet fellows, that there was no room in apartment houses provided for entertaining friends, hence the only places to meet were on the streets, in the parks, at church, or on the ferry as she had met him. When asked where she lived she said in Brickdust Row, so called because brick was crumbling over everything. At the corner she thanked him for the pleasant afternoon and they parted. Blinker owned Brickdust Row apartment houses. The next day Lawyer Oldport advised making new leases to prevent leasees from sub-letting the reception rooms to working girls who were compelled to seek companionship outside.

"'Do what you please with it,' he said harshly. 'Remodel it, burn it, raze it to the ground. But, man, it's too late, I tell you. It's too late. It's too late. It's too late.'"¹

1. "'THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1097.

Blinker, but he killed him "in land."

He was "disgraced," and he was "disgraced" that he

had to remain in the city until the next day to sign

his name to thirty legal documents. Lawyer O'Leary

had taken him around one time and shown him his property

and Blinker had been amused at the queer-looking houses

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rooms to working girls who were compelled to seek accommo-

dates outside.

"To what you please with it," he said

humbly. "Humbly it, hum it, take it to the

ground. But, man, it's too late, I tell you.

It's too late. It's too late. It's too late."

- Visits Parks

No one was more familiar with some of New York's parks than O. Henry. He knew well and easily fell into conversation with the bench loafer, the men waiting in the bed lines, the tramp, and the lover who whiled away the hours of the day and night in them. He was familiar with the residents who lived in the old mansions surrounding the squares, some of whom figure in his stories.

Prince Michael in "THE CALIPH, CUPID, AND THE CLOCK"¹ seems to impersonate O. Henry himself as he sat on the park benches offering to help out of trouble those who came within his range. A young man with a troubled anxious face sat on the third bench from him looking at the great electric clock in the Metropolitan Tower, and nervously smoking cigars. Prince Michael went over to the young man and offered assistance. For a while the fellow refused to say anything, but at last he confided that he had done wrong and that his girl, who lived in the house opposite them, would hang a white scarf out the window at eight-thirty if she were willing to forgive him, and he was still there waiting for the scarf at ten minutes to nine by the clock in the tower. Prince Michael counselled him that women were always late and that he should wait until the clock struck nine. When the clock struck the hour, the fellow looked at the

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", 99. 60-64.

- Virginia Payne

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Prince Michael in "THE CALLER, CUPID, AND THE CLOCK" seems to impersonate O. Henry himself as he sat on the park benches offering to help out of trouble those who came within his range. A young man with a troubled anxious face sat on the third bench from him looking at the great electric clock in the Metropolitan tower, and nervously smoking cigars. Prince Michael went over to the young man and offered assistance. For a while the fellow refused to say anything, but at last he confessed that he had done wrong and that his girl, who lived in the house opposite them, would have a white scarf and the window at eighth-story if she were willing to forgive him, and he was still there waiting for the scarf at ten minutes to nine by the clock in the tower. Prince Michael counseled him that women were always late and that he should wait until the clock struck nine. When the clock struck the hour, the fellow looked at the

window and saw a beautiful white scarf floating in the breeze. He asked a pedestrian what time it was. "Twenty-nine and a half minutes past eight, sir,"¹ was the reply but the young man had vanished into the darkness in the direction of the house.

The opening paragraph of "THE SHOCKS OF DOOM"² expresses an observation the author had made of the city park.

"There is an aristocracy of the public parks and even of the vagabonds who use them for their private apartments. Vallance felt rather than knew this, but when he stepped down out of this world into chaos his feet brought him directly to Madison Square."³

This story shows O. Henry's understanding of two types of men who were out of funds and who had accidentally met in the park for consolation. O. Henry being frequently penniless could sympathize with all in this condition.

"It's undiluted Hades, this city," said Ide. "One day you're eating from China; the next you are eating in China - a chop-suey joint."⁴

Vallance could be found in the park any day. One night about ten o'clock a stranger, well-dressed but without money appeared in the park and asked help and consolation from Vallance. He was hungry, but there seemed to be no

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 63.

2. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 1008-1011.

3. " " " " " p. 1008.

4. " " " " " p. 1009.

remedy for it. At last Valance begged a few sandwiches from a restaurant across the street. The stranger whose name was Ide was a nephew of Mr. Paulding, a millionaire on Riverside Drive, who on the following morning was going to make Ide heir to three millions with ten thousand dollars a year pocket money. Ide was afraid some accident would befall him during the night that would either incapacitate him or kill him so he could not receive it. These thoughts caused him to quake with fear. At ten o'clock the next morning both men appeared in Lawyer Mead's office where the lawyer announced that Mr. Paulding had changed his mind concerning his nephew, and that their relationships were to remain as they were. Then he turned to Vallance and said that his uncle had become reconciled and wished him to return home at once.

Many are the stories O. Henry has written of incidents he had seen or experienced in the parks of New York. In "WHILE THE AUTO WAITS"¹ he says of the people passing to and fro along the paths:

"It is interesting to watch them.....
It is the wonderful drama of life. Some
are going to supper and some are going....
other places. ² One wonders what their
histories are.

".....I come here to sit because here,
only, can I be near the great, common,
throbbing heart of humanity."³

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 996-999.

2. " " " " " p. 996.

3. " " " " " p. 997.

"THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT"¹ relates how by order of the Police and Park Commissioners the tenants of Beersheba Flats were compelled to sleep at night on the grass in the park during the hot weather.

It was on a bench in Madison Square that Soapy planned his campaign that would cause him to be sent to Blackwell's Island, his Palm Beach, for the winter in "THE COP AND THE ANTHEM".²

Union Square was the scene of the meeting of two old men every Thanksgiving Day for nine years. One old aristocratic gentleman believed it to be his patriotic duty to provide Stuffy Pete with an elaborate meal once each fall, when he needed it worse himself. This story is designated as "TWO THANKSGIVING DAY GENTLEMEN".³

- Interest In The "Four Million"

O. Henry's interest in the four million of New York's population is expressed in "BRICKDUST ROW"⁴ in the words:

"He now looked clearly upon a hundred thousand true idealists. Their offenses were wiped out. Counterfeit and false though the garish joys of these spangled temples were, he perceived that deep under the gilt surface they offered saving and apposite balm and satisfaction to the restless human heart. Here, at least was the husk of Romance, the empty but shining cask of Chivalry, the breath-catching though safe-guarded dip and flight of

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 1024-1027.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 30-34.
3. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", pp. 1079-1082.
4. " " " " 1093-1097.

Adventure, the magic carpet that transports you to the realms of fairy-land, though its journey be through but a few poor yards of space. He no longer saw a rabble, but his brothers seeking the ideal."¹

This democratic quality of the author is revealed also in his use of Irish, German, Spanish, and negro characters, each of whom depicts his particular racial quality and his peculiar dialect of the English language. Besides these characters O. Henry uses native born citizens of the North, South, and West to make manifest his idea of social equality and brotherhood.

"TOBIN'S PALM"² is the story of two Irishmen in New York who spent an afternoon on Coney Island. Tobin had not heard from his girl, Katie Mahorner, since she left Ireland for New York three months before, so he had his fortune told by an Egyptian palmist hoping to receive encouragement. He was told to beware of certain things but that a man with a crooked nose would bring him luck. Having returned from the island, Tobin saw a man with a crooked nose standing under a street light. For a long time they talked, but Tobin receiving no enlightenment refused to leave. At last the man invited them to lunch at his home saying

"'I will ask the new girl we have in the kitchen to make ye a pot of coffee before ye go. 'Tis fine coffee Katie Mahorner makes for a green girl just landed three months. Step in,' says the man, 'and I'll send her down to ye.'"³

1. "THE TRIMMED LAMP", p. 1095.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 3-7.
3. " " " " p. 7.

The sacrifice of Della in "THE GIFT OF THE MAGI"¹ was inspired by the heroic and sacrificial spirit of Mrs. Porter's Christmas gift to her husband when she was physically and financially unable to afford it. The story is that of a young married couple who loved each other so well that they sacrificed their most precious treasures to buy a Christmas gift for the other which, when purchased, was of no use, because each had sold the treasure which the gift of the other was to have adorned.

"THE ROMANCE OF A BUSY BROKER"² takes the reader to a business office in the heart of the city and pictures a broker busy all morning with tickertape, telephone, telegrams, messenger boys, and patrons. At noon, when there was a "lull in the uproar"³ he went to the office room of Miss Leslie, his stenographer, and asked her to be his wife. Miss Leslie looked amazed, then she seemed to understand.

"'I know now,' she said softly. 'It's this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time....Don't you remember, Harvey? We were married last evening at 8 o'clock in the Little Church Around The Corner?'"⁴

"THE CALIPH, CUPID, AND THE CLOCK"⁵ expresses the author's interest in the masses. Prince Michael characterizes O. Henry.

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 7-10.
2. " " " " 67-69.
3. " " " p.69.
4. " " " " 69.
5. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp.60-64.

The sacrifice of Della in "THE GIFT OF THE MAGI" was inspired by the heroic and unselfish spirit of Mrs. Potter's Christmas gift to her husband when she was physically and financially unable to afford it. The story is that of a young married couple who loved each other so well that they sacrificed their most precious treasure to buy a Christmas gift for the other which, when purchased, was of no use, because each had sold the treasure which the gift of the other was to have adorned.

"THE REMOVAL OF A BUSY BROKER" takes the reader to a business office in the heart of the city and pictures a broker busy all morning with telephone, telegrams, messenger boys, and patrons. At noon, when there was a "lull" in the pressure, he went to the office room of Miss Leslie, his stenographer, and asked her to be his wife. Miss Leslie looked amazed, then she seemed to understand.

"I know how," she said softly. "It's this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time. . . . Don't you remember, Harvey, we were married last evening at 8 o'clock in the little Church around the corner?"

"THE DALLIES, GURD, AND THE OTHERS" expresses

the author's interest in the masses. Prince Michael

characterizes G. Henry.

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 7-10.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 11-12.
3. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 13-14.
4. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 15-16.
5. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 17-18.

"Prince Michael sat on his favorite bench and smiled.....He could have sat at table with reigning sovereigns. The social world, the world of art, the fellowship of the elect, adulation, imitation, the homage of the fairest, honors from the highest, praise from the wisest, flattery, esteem, pleasure, fame - all the honey of life was waiting..... whenever he might choose to take it. But his choice was to sit.....on a bench in a park. For he had tasted of the fruit of the tree of life, and finding it bitter in his mouth, had stepped out of Eden for a time to seek distraction close to the unamored, beating heart of the world.

".....he loved to study humanity. He found in altruism more pleasure than his riches, his station and all the grosser sweets of life had given him. It was his chief solace and satisfaction to alleviate individual distress, to confer favors upon worthy ones who had need of succor."¹

.....
 "'I know human nature as I do the trees and grass,' said the Prince, with earnest dignity. 'I am a master of philosophy, a graduate in art, and I hold the purse of a Fortunatus. There are few mortal misfortunes that I cannot alleviate or overcome.'"²

O. Henry had experienced the trials and gloom of the world and, realizing that others had also, he made a resolution to lighten the burdens of individuals so far as he could while he lived. He saw the humorous side of serious situations. He believed that a happy ending was essential in everything in life, that happiness and mirth must replace misery and gloom, and his ever ready humor and keen wit were equal to every situation presented. These qualities of the author have been carried over into his stories, the majority of which have a happy ending and possess the agreeable

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 61.
 2. " " " " 62.

quality of producing a laugh, the enemy of gloom.

"INNOCENTS OF BROADWAY"¹ shows the comedy of two Western boys, Jeff and Andy, who were visiting in New York and who were intrusted with five thousand dollars, the earnings from fifteen years of work by a simple New Yorker, who had scarcely left his precinct in all the years he had been a citizen of the metropolis. The boys were genuine grafters but they realized grafting in New York was carried on in a much different way than in the West. While the old man was asleep in their room one afternoon, the boys placed a bogus certificate for one hundred thousand shares of stock in a fictitious company in his hand and left the city.

- Whimsical Nature

The absurdity of the situation and the conversation provides the humor of "MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD KIN"² which is the story of a burglar who entered a house during the summer vacation while the family was away, and finding only the man of the house there ordered him to raise his hands. The man raised one. "'Up with the other one,' ordered the burglar."³ The man could not obey for rheumatism prevented, whereupon the burglar lapsed into a reminiscence of his own case of the disease, and a discussion of the kinds and cures followed. The burglar claimed there was only one thing that would ease it - booze.

1. "THE GENTLE GRAFTER", pp. 238-241.
2. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 660-662.
3. " " " p. 661.

quality of production a laugh, the enemy of humor.

"TIMOTHY OF BROADWAY" shows the comedy of

two Western boys, "Left" and "Right", who were visiting in

New York and who were interested with five thousand

dollars, the earnings from fifteen years of work by a

single New Yorker, who had recently lost his position.

In all the years he had been a citizen of the metropolis.

The boys were genuine gamblers but they realized gambling

in New York was carried on in a much different way than

in the West. While the old man was asked in their room

one afternoon, the boys played a bogus certificate for

one hundred thousand shares of stock in a fictitious

company in his hand and left the city.

- Whimsical Master -

The absurdity of the situation and the conver-

sation provides the humor of "MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD RIM"

which is the story of a burglar who entered a house during

the summer vacation while the family was away, and finding

only the man of the house there ordered him to raise his

hands. The man raised one. "Up with the other one,"

ordered the burglar. "The man could not obey for

the man's hand was raised, whereupon the burglar jumped into

a reminiscence of his own case of the disease, and a

discussion of the kind and other followed. The

burglar claimed there was only one thing that would save

it - disease.

1. "THE GUY OF THE GUY" pp. 222-241.
2. "THE GUY OF THE GUY" pp. 222-241.
3. "THE GUY OF THE GUY" pp. 222-241.

"Say - this job's off.....get on your clothes and let's go out and have some....."

"Climb out," said the burglar, 'I'll help you get into your duds.'

.....
"As they were going out the door the citizen turned and started back.

"Liked to have forgot my money,' he explained; 'laid it on the dresser last night.' The burglar caught him by the right sleeve.

"Come on,' he said, bluffly. 'I ask you. Leave it alone. I've got the price. Ever try witch hazel and oil of wintergreen?'"¹

Another story which encourages a hearty chuckle is "SPRINGTIME A LA CARTE".² Sarah was typing menu cards for the Home Restaurant. "Dandelions With Hard-Boiled Egg" was the new item - a sign that spring had arrived. Memories of the previous spring when she had visited Sunnybrook Farm and met and become engaged to Walter Franklin, a modern agriculturist, who "had crowned her queen of love"³ with a wreath of dandelions, with the intention of marrying her when dandelions appeared next spring, caused her eyes to fill with tears, for she had not heard from Walter for two weeks. She continued typing and finished the cards. The next night as she sat reading, the doorbell rang. Sarah ran to the door and met Walter half way up the stairs. He had been looking for her for a week and had strolled into the restaurant below where on his menu card instead of "dandelions" were typed these words: "DEAREST WALTER, WITH HARD-BOILED EGG".

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", p. 662.
2. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 46-50.
3. " " " " p. 48.

That O. Henry was of a whimsical turn of mind one needs only to read his stories to perceive. There are whims on nearly every page; whims of words, phrases, twisted or reverted or diverted statements, foolish ideas mixed with serious ones, and serious thoughts mingled with trifling ones. Many of his stories as a whole are of a whimsical nature. These whims are not forced, but are the natural product of a whimsical personality.

"SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS"¹ is an example of diverted statement with its whimsical consequence. Nevada Warren, an ignorant but charming and vivacious Western girl came to live in her uncle's home in New York City, where falling in love with her cousin Gilbert, a number of notes were passed between them. Nevada persuaded her cousin Barbara to read the notes to her. One night returning late from the theatre, she found awaiting her arrival a note which Barbara read thus: "Dearest Nevada - Come to my studio at twelve o'clock tonight. Do not fail."² Hurrying through the snow storm, she reached his room on the eighteenth floor of an office building, where Gilbert, surprised, proposed to her and they were married that night after Nevada explained that she had never gone to school and could not read. On the way home Gilbert quoted the contents of his note: "My dear Miss Warren - You were right about

1. "OPTIONS", pp. 551-557.

2. " " p. 555.

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 "Dearest Nevada - Come to my studio at twelve o'clock
 tonight. Do not fail." Hurrying through the snow
 storm, she reached his room on the eleventh floor of
 an office building, where Gilbert, surprised, proposed
 to her and they were married that night after Nevada
 explained that she had never come to school and could
 not read. On the way home Gilbert quoted the contents
 of his note: "My dear Miss Warren - You were right about

the flower. It was hydrangea, and not a lilac."

"'All right,' said Nevada. 'But let's forget it. The joke's on Barbara anyway.'"¹

"SHOES" and "SHIPS"² illustrate O. Henry's whimsicality splendidly. These stories show some of the absurd things that happen in life and how the ludicrous situations are met. The consul at Coralio received a letter from a friend in the States asking about the favorable prospects for the sale of shoes in that town. Believing the letter to be a joke it was answered in like manner stating that the shoe business had been overlooked, that there were three thousand inhabitants there but no shoe store, and that many were going around without shoes. In a few weeks, the friend and his daughter with a shipload of shoes arrived. To get rid of the shoes a demand had to be created. The consul cabled a friend to send five hundred pounds of stiff cockleburrs which, when they arrived, were scattered all over the ground making walking without shoes an impossibility. The demand had been created and hundreds of pairs of shoes were sold. The consul explained the situation to the shoe merchant, helped him sell the remainder of his stock, went back home with him, and married the daughter. A few days later several ships full of cockleburrs arrived in the harbor of Coralio. Keogh, the new consul, slid from his chair to his favorite rug and filled the air with unrighteous laughter.

1. "OPTIONS", p. 557.

2. "CABBAGES AND KINGS", pp. 494-503.

the flower. It was hyacinth, and got a little
 "I think," said Corallo, "but let's forget

it. The joke's on Barbara anyway."

"Barbara" and "Barbara" illustrated O. Henry's

whimsicality splendidly. These stories show some of the

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situations are met. The comedy at Corallo received a

letter from a friend in the States asking about the

favorable prospects for the sale of shoes in that town.

Believing the letter to be a joke it was answered in like

manner stating that the shoe business had been overlooked.

That there were three thousand inhabitants there but no

shoe store, and that many were going around without shoes.

In a few weeks, the friend and his daughter with a shipment

of shoes arrived. To get rid of the shoes a friend had to

be created. The comedy called a friend to send five

hundred pounds of early cockleburrs which, when they

arrived, were scattered all over the ground within walking

distance from the store. The demand had been

created and hundreds of pairs of shoes were sold. The

comedy explained the situation to the shoe merchant.

helped him sell the remainder of his stock, went back

home with him, and married the daughter. A few days later

several ships full of cockleburrs arrived in the harbor of

Corallo. Noogh, the new comedy, told from his chair to

his favorite rug and filled the air with unrepentant

laughter.

Another example, "THE HAND THAT RILES THE WORLD"¹ is the story of two Western boys, Andy and Jeff, who went to Washington, D. C., to procure the position of United States Marshall for Bill Humble. At the capital they found that such appointments were made through a woman lobbyist. Jeff doubted the ability of any woman in getting a position for any man. They made their business known to Mrs. Avery and returned on the appointed day and received the formal appointment. On the train not far from the Arkansas border-line they opened the large envelope and looked at the document which appointed Mr. Humble postmaster of Dade City, Florida. At the next station the boys left the train, mailed the document to Mr. Humble, and started toward the Lake Superior region.

"TWO RENEGADES"² is whimsical both in manner of treatment and plot. A Northern soldier in charge of troops in the Canal Zone was captured by the Colombian troops and condemned to be shot. O'Keefe appealed to the United States consul for assistance, but was promised no protection from the government. In despair O'Keefe appealed to Dr. Milliken, a confirmed Southerner, who promised to obtain his freedom provided he would swear allegiance to the Confederate States of America. O'Keefe took the oath of allegiance to a government that had been dead many years. Two days before O'Keefe was to have

1. "THE GENTLE GRAFTER", pp. 224-227.
 2. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 416-422.

Another example, "THE HAND THAT FEELS THE

WOUND" is the story of two Western boys, Andy and
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 and returned on the specified day and received the
 formal appointment. On the train not far from the
 Arkansas border-line they opened the large envelope
 and looked at the document which appointed Mr. Humble
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 the boys left the train, mailed the document to Mr.
 Humble, and started toward the Lake Superior region.
 "TWO RENEGADES" is whistled both in manner
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 of troops in the Canal Zone was captured by the Colombian
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 no protection from the government. In despair O'Keefe
 appealed to J. William, a confirmed Southerner, who
 promised to obtain his freedom provided he would swear
 allegiance to the Confederate States of America. O'Keefe
 took the oath of allegiance to a government that had been
 dead many years. Two days before O'Keefe was to have

been shot, Doctor Milliken paid the Colombian government twelve thousand Confederate dollars which he had saved in a bank, and advised O'Keefe to leave before the government discovered the kind of dollars it had in its possession.

"Now, let's hear you give the password," says Doc Milliken.

"Hurrah for Jeff Davis!" says I."¹

- Influence Of His Extensive Newspaper Reading

The influence of O. Henry's extensive newspaper reading may readily be detected in his stories. He studied words and his significant and unusual use of words in his stories is very striking and characteristic of the author.

From "SHOES"² we have this expression: "I'll sit here tonight and pull out the think stop," and again, "They'll all buy shoes like centipedes."

In "A SERVICE OF LOVE"³ he has written, "Enter you at the Golden Gate, hang your hat on Hatteras, your cape on Cape Horn, and go out by the Labrador," also "But after a while Art flagged.....even if some switchman doesn't flag it."

In "DISCOUNTERS OF MONEY"⁴ we find this: "The money-caliphs are handicapped. They have no idea that earth has no sorrow that dough cannot heal."

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 422.
2. " " " " 498.
3. " " " " 21.
4. " " " " 297.

been shot. Doctor Wilkins said the Colombian govern-
ment owes thousands of dollars which he had
saved in a bank, and advised O'Keefe to leave before
the government discovered the kind of dollar it had
in its possession.

"Now, let's hear you give the password."

says Doc Wilkins.

"Murray for Jeff Davis," says I.

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words in his stories is very striking and characteristic
of the author.

From "SHORE" we have this expression: "I'll
sit here tonight and pull out the thick stop," and again,
"They'll all buy shoes like contrabands."

In "A SERVICE OF LOVE" he has written, "Enter
you at the Golden Gate, hang your hat on Hatteras, your
cape on Cape Horn, and go out by the Labrador," also
"But after a while the liars.... even if some switch-
men couldn't fix it."

In "DISCOUNTING OF MONEY" we find this: "The
money-couplers are handicapped. They have no idea that
earth has no sorrow that dough cannot heal."

1.	"KNOWS OF NOTHING"	p. 422.
2.	"	p. 422.
3.	"	p. 422.
4.	"	p. 422.

"THE COUNTRY OF ELUSION"¹ explains one of his methods of reading meanings into words:

"Her gown was of that thin black fabric whose name through the change of a single vowel seems to summon visions ranging between the extremes of man's experience. Spelled with an 'ê' it belongs to Gallic witchery and diaphanous dreams; with an 'a' it drapes lamentations and woe."

Of a town in "OCTOPUS MAROONED"² he says, "The name of it was Bird City; but it wasn't. The town had about 2,000 inhabitants, mostly men." Another quotation from the same story: "Me and Andy walked out to the edge of town to view the mudscape"; and another, "Bird City hopped out of its nest, waggled its pin feathers, and strolled out for its matutinal toot."

"The floor was variegated with spirituous puddles" is taken from "THE LOST BLEND".³

One finds in his stories many odd bits of information which less observant and less thoughtful readers than O. Henry would have passed by unnoticed.

In "SHIPS"⁴ we find the statement that Don Valdazar weighed "twenty stone"; the English unit of averdupois weight being the stone which is fourteen pounds. Another English reference is that to "the tin mines of Cornwall" in "DOUGHERTY'S EYE-OPENER".⁵

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 1139.
2. " " " " 210.
3. " " " " 1117.
4. " " " " 500.
5. " " " " 986.

"THE COUNTRY OF ARAGON" explains one of

his methods of reading meanings into words:

"For even we of that thin black fabric whose name through the change of a single vowel seems to summon visions ranging between the extremes of man's experience. Spelled with an 'e' it belongs to Gallic witchery and dangerous dreams; with an 'a' it brings lamentations and woe."

Of a town in "COUNTRY OF ARAGON" he says,

"The name of it was Bird City; but it wasn't. The

town had about 2,000 inhabitants, mostly men."

Another quotation from the same story: "We and Andy

walked out to the edge of town to view the landscape";

and another, "Bird City hopped out of its nest, wagged

its pin feathers, and scurried out for its matrimonial

toot."

"The floor was variegated with epithets"

"quotation" is taken from "THE LAST BIRCH".³

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Velazquez weighed "twenty stone"; the English unit of

weight being the stone which is fourteen

pounds. Another English reference is that to "the

tin mines of Cornwall" in "BURNING THE EYE-BROW".⁴

1.	"ROADS OF DEATH"	p. 1139.
2.	" "	" 210.
3.	" "	" 1117.
4.	" "	" 800.
5.	" "	" 928.

In "EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY",¹ he makes a statement which is true of New Englanders today: "His words were a telescope to the city men, whose eyes had looked upon Youngstown, O., and whose tongues had called it 'West'."

In other stories he mentions the ice block on the Allegheny River which is an annual occurrence, speaks of Chataqua Lake, and many contemporary characters such as Theodore Roosevelt, Andrew Carnegie, and Edward Bok.

"SHIPS"² contains a quaint reference to "Uncle Sam": "Then he (Johnny Atwood) besought his great Uncle of the waving goatee and starred vest to accept his resignation."

From reading and from life O. Henry gathered many slang expressions besides coining others to suit his fancy or the occasion. His slang does not appear objectionable, but adds vivacity and vigor to the tale.

In "THE PENDULUM"³ John Perkins says of himself, "I'm a double-dyed dub."

"I notice you have an affinity for grubbing in the banquet hall" is found in "CUPID A LA CARTE".⁴

From "THE CHAIR OF PHILANTHROMATHEMATICS"⁵ we take the following:

"What!.....Do you mean to tell me that them infernal clod-hopping, dough-headed, pup-faced, goose-brained, gate-stealing,

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 1054.
2. " " " " 501.
3. " " " " 1078.
4. " " " " 149.
5. " " " " 223.

In "EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY," he takes
 a statement which is true of New Englanders today: "His
 words were a telescope to the city men, whose eyes had
 looked upon Townsend, U., and whose tongues had called
 it 'West.'"

In other stories he mentions the ice block on
 the Allegheny River which is an annual occurrence, speaks
 of Oyster Lake, and many contemporary characters such
 as Theodore Roosevelt, Andrew Carnegie, and Edward Bok.
 "Uncle Sam": "Then he (Johnny Atwood) brought his great
 Uncle of the waving goatee and started west to accept
 his restoration."

From reading and from life O. Henry gathered
 many slang expressions besides coining others to suit
 his fancy or the occasion. His slang does not appear
 objectionable, but adds vivacity and vigor to the tale.
 In "THE PRISONER," John Terkins says of

himself, "I'm a double-dyed dab."
 "I notice you have an affinity for gambling in
 the bander hall" is found in "TUPID A LA CARTA."
 From "THE CHAIR OF PHILANTHROPY" we
 take the following:

"What!..... Do you mean to tell me that
 these infernal old-hoggers, down-headed,
 pig-faced, goose-brained, gate-stealing,

1.	"ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 1034.
2.	" " " " " "
3.	" " " " " "
4.	" " " " " "
5.	" " " " " "
6.	" " " " " "

rabbit-eared sons of horse thieves
have soaked us for that much?.....
Then to Helvetia with philanthropy."

"Jumping jonquils! but it's great out there,"
said Vuyning speaking of his father's ranch in the West,
in "FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY".¹

"Great tarantulas!" is an expression of surprise
taken from "A DEPARTMENTAL CASE".²

"'Great catamounts!' exclaimed Nevada. 'These
centre-fire buttons are a nuisance. I'd rather wear
buckskins. Oh, Barbara, please shuck the hide off that
letter and read it.'"³

"BY COURIER"⁴ contains excellent examples of the
author's use of slang by the language of the boy in the
park who carries messages between a young man and his
girl who had had a misunderstanding.

"'Lady,' he said, 'dat gent on de oder bench
sent yer a song and dance by me. If yer don't
know de guy, and he's tryin' to do de Johnny
act, say de word, and I'll call a cop in t'ree
minutes. If yer does know him, and he's on de
square, w'y I'll spiel yer de bunch of hot air
he sent yer.'"

"'Awe,' said the boy,.....'yer know what
I mean, lady. 'Tain't a turn, it's wind. He
told me to tell yer he's got his collars and
cuffs in dat grip for a scoot clean out to
'Frisco. Den he's goin' to shoot snow-birds
in the Klondike. He says yer told him not to
send 'round no more pink notes nor come hangin'
over de garden gate, and he takes dis means of
puttin' yer wise. He says yer refereed him
out like a has-been, and never give him no
chance to kick at de decision. He says yer
swiped him, and never said why.'"⁵

1. "ROADS OF DESTINY", p. 1055.
2. " " " " " 382.
3. "OPTIONS", p. 554.
4. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 75-77.
5. " " " " " p. 76.

rabbit-eared sons of horse thieves
have soaked us for that night....
Then to Helvetia with philosophy."

"Jumping Jonathan! but it's great out there."

said Vynning speaking of his father's ranch in the West.

in "FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY".¹

"Great carterhouse!" is an expression of surprise

taken from "A DEPARTMENTAL CASE".²

"Great carterhouse!" exclaimed Nevada. "These

carterhouse buttons are a nuisance. I'd rather wear

buttonholes. Oh, Barbara, please chuck the hide off that

letter and read it."³

"BY COURTESY" contains excellent examples of the

author's use of slang by the language of the boy in the

part who carries messages between a young man and his

girl who had a misunderstanding.

"Lady," he said, "let me see on the other hand
want you a song and dance by me. If you don't
know the song, and he's trying to do the Johnny
not say the word, and I'll call a dog in 4-yes
minutes. If you don't know him, and he's on the
separate, why I'll appeal for the bunch of hot air
he sent you."

"Lady," said the boy, "...you know what
I mean, lady. 'Tain't a word, it's a word. He
told me to tell you he's got his collar and
killed in that grip for a second class out to
Chicago. But he's going to shoot some birds
in the Klondike. He says you told him not to
send home no more pink notes nor come hanging
over the garden gate, and he takes his means of
putting you wise. He says you refused him
out like a has-been, and never give him no
chance to kick at the decision. He says you
swiped him, and never said why."⁴

1. "FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY". p. 1033.

2. "A DEPARTMENTAL CASE". p. 302.

3. "BY COURTESY". p. 204.

4. "FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY". pp. 76-77.

p. 76.

"De lady says dat she's on to de fact dat girls is dead easy when a feller come spielin' ghost stories and tryin' to make up, and dat's why she won't listen to no soft-soap. She says she caught yer dead to rights, huggin' a bunch o'calico in de hot-house. She side-stepped in to pull some posies and yer was squeezin' de oder girl to beat de band. She says it looked cute, all right all right, but it made her sick. She says yer better git busy, and make a sneak for de train."¹

"De gent says he's had de ski-bunk put on him widout no cause. He says he's no bum guy; and lady, yer read dat letter, and I'll bet yer he's a white sport, all right."²

- Sympathy For The Unfortunate

O. Henry possessed unlimited sympathy for the unfortunate and often performed a praiseworthy deed for the benefit of a suffering one. One of his stories which demonstrates this quality is "A DEPARTMENTAL CASE"³ in which the marriage of Amanda Colvin, daughter of one of the heroic pioneer settlers of Texas, and Benton Sharp, one of the most noted "bad" men of the state had ended unhappily. Sharp had misused his wife and brought her to penury. Going to the courthouse to make an appeal to the governor, who by chance was away, she told her story to Mr. Luke Standifer, Commissioner of Insurance, Statistics, and History, and a friend of Amos Colvin, her father. No money from the state could be obtained for her except by act of the legislature which was not advisable. Standifer asked where her husband was, if he had any insurance, and

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 76.
2. " " " " 77.
3. "ROADS OF DESTINY", pp. 379-386.

if the premiums had been paid on it. After the office closed, Standifer took the train for San Antonio where in a restaurant, Sharp, intoxicated, drew his gun on Standifer, who being quicker shot Sharp through the heart. By appointment Mrs. Sharp returned to the commissioner's office where she was told that she could get the insurance in the amount of five thousand dollars in ten days. The department had done its best.

Another story illustrating this point is "SISTERS OF THE GOLDEN CIRCLE".¹ Two newly married couples were taking a sight-seeing tour through New York City on the top of a double-decker bus. One couple, Mr. and Mrs. James Williams of Cloverdale, Missouri, sat on the back seat, and the other couple, Mr. and Mrs. Pink McGuire of Philadelphia sat just in front of them. The men were very much alike in appearance. The women feeling a tie of kinship whispered, smiled, and nodded. Suddenly along the route the bus was stopped by officers who were searching for Pinky McGuire, a Philadelphia burglar, but Pinky had swung himself over the side of the bus and found safety among the bushes of a nearby park. The officers entered and seized Mr. Williams. "Go with them quietly, Pinky, and maybe it will be in your favor,"² counseled his wife. Cheerfully and jestingly he went with the officers to the police station. In an hour Mrs. Williams with her uncle from Madison Avenue came and proved the innocence of the victim, who was immediately

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 64-67.

2. " " " p. 66.

released. Mrs. Williams had permitted this error to be made to protect the happiness of the other bride who had been married only that morning.

"THE FURNISHED ROOM"¹ provides another example of this type of story which is full of pathos and ends in tragedy. The main facts of this story were told to O. Henry by one of the two girls whom the author furnished with a good substantial meal at the Caledonia one night when Al Jennings was visiting him. O. Henry was so absorbed with the pathetic account of the girl's death by means of asphyxiation and of the youth's futile efforts to locate his sweetheart, that he was not aware when the girls left and the result of his absorption is "THE FURNISHED ROOM" one of the finest stories he has written.

A young man searching day after day and week after week for his girl, a young actress, and failing to locate her, came to the boarding house of Mrs. Purdy where he rented the third floor back room, paying his rent a week in advance. Mrs. Purdy showed him the closet, where to find water and the gas; but as she departed he asked if she had had a boarder by the name of Eloise Vashner, to which question Mrs. Purdy gave a negative answer. He closed the door and prepared to go to bed for he was tired, but something told him Eloise had been in that room. He smelled the scent of mignonette, her favorite odor of perfume, and seemed to

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", pp. 77-81.

released. Mrs. Williams had permitted this error to be made to protect the happiness of the other child who had been married only that morning.

"THE FURNISHED ROOM" provides another example of this type of story which is full of pathos and ends in tragedy. The main facts of this story were told to O. Henry by one of the two girls whom the author furnished with a good substantial meal at the California one night when Al Jennings was visiting him. O. Henry was so absorbed with the pathetic account of the girl's death by means of asphyxiation and of the youth's futile efforts to locate his sweetheart, that he was not aware when the girls left and the result of his speculation is "THE FURNISHED ROOM" one of the finest stories he has written.

A young man searching day after day and week after week for his girl, a young actress, and failing to locate her, came to the boarding house of Mrs. Purdy where he rented the third floor back room, paying his rent a week in advance. Mrs. Purdy showed him the closet, where to find water and the gas; but as she departed he asked if she had had a boarder by the name of Elsie Vagner, to which question Mrs. Purdy gave a negative answer. He closed the door and prepared to go to bed for he was tired, but something told him Elsie had been in that room. He unlocked the door of Elsie's room, her favorite odor of perfume, and seemed to

hear a voice to which he answered, "Yes, dear."¹ He searched every crevice and corner for some evidence of her but found none. Again he questioned the landlady, who named the occupants of the room for a year back. The man returned to his room, tore the sheet into strips and stuffed every crevice, turned out the light, turned on the gas, and lay down upon the bed. Just one week before Eloise Vashner had experienced the same fate in that very room.

- The Money Question

The question of money was ever an important one with O. Henry. We find it is an important one in his stories, too. He belonged to that

"kind of poor aristocrats that turn down their noses at people who have money....²
I mean people who have just money....."

"He was no worshipper of the actual minted coin or stamped paper, but he had always believed in its almost unlimited power to purchase."³

In "SHOCKS OF DOOM"⁴ he says, "I love money, Dawson - I am as happy as a god when it's trickling through my fingers," but he loved it only for the good it could do and the happiness it could create in others. His many stories already referred to above alluding to lack of money typify the author's own characteristic financial shortage.

1. "THE FOUR MILLION", p. 80.
2. " " " " 298.
3. " " " " 300.
4. " " " " 1010.

heard a voice to which he answered, "Yes, dear." He
 searched every crevice and corner for some evidence
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 lady, who named the occupants of the room for a year
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 into strips and stuffed every crevice, turned out
 the light, turned on the gas, and lay down upon the bed.
 Just one week before Nicolas Veshner had experienced the
 same fate in that very room.

- The Money Question -

The question of money was ever an important
 one with G. Henry. We find it is an important one in
 his stories, too. He believes so that

"Kind of poor aristocrats that turn down
 their noses at people who have money....
 I mean people who have real money...."
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 minted gold or stamped paper, but he had
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1.	"THEY WERE MILLION"	80.
2.	" "	292.
3.	" "	300.
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- His New York Friends

O. Henry had not many intimate friends and none to whom he would confide his innermost secrets. Al Jennings was his most intimate friend. "FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY"¹ is the story of a dinner party the author and his small group of friends had one night on the occasion of a visit from Jennings who was invited to tell some of his hair-raising experiences in the West and who, through these tales, aroused such interest as to become almost an idol of his citybred listeners. O. Henry thought this incident together with his own implications that he had been an accomplice of Jennings was the means of added success for himself as an author.

Most of O. Henry's friends were editors of the magazines and papers to which he contributed. "THE PLUTONIAN FIRE"² interprets his habit of procrastination in handing in his copy. Often he would slip it under the editor's door at one or two o'clock in the morning. Sometimes after reading his story, the editor would burst into his room "and beat him on the back and call him names - names high up in the galaxy of the immortals that we admired."³

- Poor Health

For more than a year before he died O. Henry's

1. "THE VOICE OF THE CITY", pp. 1051-1055.
2. " " " " " " 1012-1015.
3. " " " " " " p. 1014.

health was failing. "LET ME FEEL YOUR PULSE"¹ gives in the author's characteristically humorous way the experiences he had with the doctors whom he consulted about his ailments. He was thoroughly examined, was prescribed medicine, rest, and exercise, and was taken to sanitariums and fashionable hotels for changes of environment. Finally, he went South to his old home among the Blue Ridge Mountains where the silence was overwhelming. Here he climbed the mountains every day with the old doctor searching for the medicinal plant that would cure him. He had about one chance in a thousand for recovery; and although he looked well and strong, he was not; nor could he convince his friends that his chances for recovery were slight. "Absolute rest and exercise" was his prescription. He ends the story with a pathetic touch.

"What rest more remedial than to sit with Amaryllis (his wife) in the shade, and, with a sixth sense, read the wordless Theocritan idyl of the gold-bannered blue mountains marching orderly into the dormitories of the night."²

1. "SIXES AND SEVENS", pp. 685-692.
2. " " " " p. 692.

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"What rest more remedial than to sit
 with Anaxagoras (his wife) in the shade,
 and, with a sixth sense, read the wordless
 Theocritus idyl of the cold-battered pine
 mountains marching orderly into the hor-
 izon of the night."

V. SUMMARY

William Sidney Porter, the preëminently American short story writer, better known as O. Henry, was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on September 11, 1862. Four years later when Mrs. Porter died, Dr. Porter and his three sons moved into the home of his mother and her family. Miss "Lina" Porter, O. Henry's aunt, who became his teacher is given the honor of first creating in the boy the desire for good literature and of planting in him the seeds of the future short story writer. Leaving school at the age of fifteen, he studied pharmacy for five years in his uncle Clark Porter's drug store in Greensboro where he absorbed every professional and human experience with eagerness. Reading much and getting little exercise during these plastic years brought on a weakening of the constitution. To prevent a complete breakdown, he spent the next two years on the Hall ranch in Texas where he enjoyed the romance and adventure of that great pioneer state. The next few years he lived in Austin where he held several positions, namely: cigar and soda fountain clerk, commander of a squad sent to help end a railroad strike in Fort Worth, bookkeeper for a real estate firm, draftsman in the Land Office for four years, and teller in the First National Bank of Austin. In 1887 O. Henry married Athol Estes Roach. He purchased a paper and was editor of "THE ROLLING STONE" for a year. Later he served as reporter for the "HOUSTON DAILY POST" to which he frequently contributed cartoons.

William Sidney Porter, the pseudonymously
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 a paper and was editor of "THE HOLLYWOOD STORY" for a year.
 Later he served as reporter for the "HOUSTON DAILY POST"
 to which he frequently contributed cartoons.

Suddenly he was summoned to appear at court for trial on a charge of misappropriating a little over a thousand dollars. Instead of going to the trial he fled to Central America where he remained but a short time. Here he met Al and Frank Jennings, famous Western bandits, and accompanied them in a necessarily hasty departure and on a sail around the continent of South America. Learning of Mrs. Porter's serious illness, he hastened home to take care of her and to give himself up to the court. Mrs. Porter soon died and not long thereafter O. Henry was sentenced to a five year term in Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus, Ohio, for a crime which he always denied having committed, and for which little evidence was found. In prison O. Henry remained silent about himself, broke off all relations with his friends, except his family, became night clerk of the penitentiary drug store where he learned of the suffering and misfortunes of the prisoners and listened to their tales of adventure prior to their entrance into the federal institution. No prisoner knew the actual conditions in the penitentiary better than he. During the quiet hours of the night when he was on duty, he began to write short stories. Because of good behavior, O. Henry was discharged at the end of three years and three months.

Soon after his discharge he was invited to go to New York and write stories for AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE. He accepted this invitation, and soon after his arrival in

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Soon after his discharge he was invited to go to New York and write stories for ALBION'S MAGAZINE. He accepted this invitation, and soon after his arrival in

the metropolis, he made another contract for a story a week at a hundred dollars each with the NEW YORK WORLD. These contracts gave him a zest for his work, he took a new interest in life, and began definitely to use his nom de plume, which he had selected before entering prison, to conceal his identity. His next business was to supply himself with story material, and he found no more fertile field than that which the parks, streets, cafes, and saloons of New York with its heterogeneous population provided. With his spirit of adventure and romance, his innate optimistic and whimsical nature, his unlimited sympathy for the unfortunate, this teller of tales found ample material. His generosity to others often caused him to be in need of funds which his few loyal friends, the newspaper and magazine editors, supplied for him. Although O. Henry made temporary acquaintances easily, he was always reticent among his most intimate companions.

In 1909 O. Henry became quite ill. He submitted himself to physical examination, had frequent changes of environment, and spent six months among the mountains of North Carolina, with but little improvement. In March, 1910, he returned to New York where on June 3, he collapsed and was taken to the Polyclinic Hospital where he died on the morning of June 5, 1910.

In the short period of eight years in New York, O. Henry wrote two hundred fifty-one stories, a remarkable number for this brief period. In setting and material they are distinctly American. His stories deal with

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social aspects and problems in which humor, comedy and surprise occupy an important place. Mood is an important element of O. Henry's stories. The mood of the story took on the mood of the author. By a few choice words and phrases he portrays the outstanding qualities of his characters. As a plot builder he is a genius. O. Henry is not a preacher but his stories center around some common human truth in which a moral is implied. His stories encourage nobility of character and a high idealism.

O. Henry's short stories are the result of the author's introspection of his life and character and the incidents involved therein. In his stories the parent is portrayed as the protector of the family group, as a provider for the child's needs, as the child's companion and as one responsible for the child's character and future well-being. His boyhood sports and adventures playing Indian and his early attempts in drawing are not overlooked. The five years of experience in Clark Porter's drug store as a druggist and a student of human nature, distributing medicine, learning the business, and listening to the personal confessions, stories, and practical jokes of the customers; the wealth of experience received from life on the Hall ranch in Texas, riding across the broad expanse of hot plains, learning the rancher's accomplishments, dangers, loves, and hates, and all the romance which this frontier state provided, are amply represented in his stories.

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The fact that O. Henry realized his inability to make a professional success as a cartoonist, the fact that he sketched into his pictures of characters outstanding and hidden qualities that endure through the years; his efforts as a humorist reporter; and suggestions of his elopement are given their proper emphasis among his tales.

The artful banker of the small pioneer town, the intimate relationships between the local bankers themselves and their customers; the sudden departure of the author for Central America where he could live in peace and start life over, his making of friends there, their celebration of the Fourth, his absorption of current stories which were important to the government and to commerce or to individuals in this land of enchantment and fraud made such impressions on the author that he transformed the facts into fiction.

The quaint French and Creole city of New Orleans with its cafés and shops resembling those of the Old World and its old French characters trying to preserve the customs of their ancestors, this winter "paradise of the tramps" with its levees and wharves piled high with plantation products ready for export, form a queer composite picture.

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of the accounts of the daring experiences by the Western bandits all find a place in his stories.

Many of his stories reflect his determination to start life anew and those which contain concealed characters indicate the author's desire to shield himself behind his nom de plume. Curiosity to know what is around the corner, behind the many closed doors of the city; to know the schemes men have in broadcasting or covering their crimes; to decipher the unexpected meaning of bouquets of flowers placed in a window, the significance of cards passed and dropped on the street, or of mementoes flung into the audience at a vaudeville performance - these produced romance and adventure which became story material for O. Henry.

His experiences, observations, and impressions of incidents which occurred in saloons and cafés; his unparalleled interest in the working girl, her necessity for caution in the selection of work, her methods of making friends, her spirit of sacrifice for the pleasure of another, her spirit of sharing, her difficulties for entertainment and entertaining, her small, ill-lighted, ill-ventilated, gloomy, unattractive room - all these things O. Henry pictures vividly in his stories.

In the parks of the metropolis O. Henry learned the stories and the problems of the tramp, the bench loafer, and the lover. Here he observed the chance meeting of strangers that occurs daily there, and the accidental or planned incidents that might happen any time.

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Any phase of life that affected the city's four million of mixed languages and races found a large place in his heart and in his stories.

O. Henry studied human nature and realizing its tendency to be pessimistic and gloomy, set about bringing cheer and happiness to his fellowmen. He places knavish Western boys in a New York setting and produces humor. A burglar makes friends and sympathizes with the man he is supposed to be robbing; a lover locates his sweetheart by an error she made in typing the menu cards for a restaurant.

The author's whimsicality is shown by diverted statements, tricks, and ludicrous situations. The influence of O. Henry's newspaper reading may be found in his choice of words, and his use of various national vernaculars and slang, his allusions to contemporary characters, and his use of quaint and unusual bits of information.

Many of his stories indicate his unlimited sympathy for the unfortunate. His generosity in helping this class of people was often the cause of his own poverty. He liked money but he liked it for the good he could do with it and the wealth of story material it brought him in return. O. Henry's last illness furnished the plot for one of his last stories. The sad note at the end of the story foreshadows his death which occurred on June 5, 1910.

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VI. CONCLUSION

It is the common tendency of writers to incorporate into their literary productions much autobiographical material. In a small way O. Henry has followed this custom, but in a larger degree his short stories deal with the moods and impressions people and places made upon his keen and sensitive nature. In the various stages of his life from youth to death O. Henry appeared to be peculiarly affected by the external, moral, and social circumstances that surrounded his fellowmen. Places and the spirit of places exerted a powerful influence over him. The picturesquely peaceful and sleepy inhabitants of the Central American republic; the bold, robust ranger and fearless desperadoes and bandits of the Southwest and the border; the wily Westerner; the dignity of the Southern aristocracy; the shopgirl, clerk, tramp, thief, policeman, and lover in the cafés, saloons, parks, and streets of New York City are subjects which no other American author has developed nor could have with such innate whimsical, sparkling wit, abundant humor, and fertile invention as O. Henry. His genuine sympathy with suffering and misfortune, his keen understanding of the natural inclinations and dispositions of man, his swift and penetrative interpretation of life, his characteristic optimism are uniquely human and indicate a talent at once original and delightful which is nothing less than genius.

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Stories that surrounded his childhood, his first

the spirit of places exerted a powerful influence

over him. The historical, social and literary

influences of the Central American world, the bold,

robust character and romantic sensibilities and moods of

the Southwest and the Pacific the West, the

diversity of the Southern landscape, the changing

of day, night, rain, drought, and love in the earth,

solitude, peace, and sorrow of New York City and the

which no other American author has developed nor could

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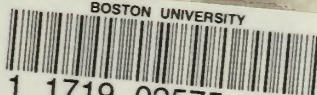
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